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PROCEEDINGS
OF
The Fourteenth Indian Philosophical Congress

Allahabad

1938

Part—I

[SYMPOSIUM]

Editor :

S. K. Das

Price Rupee One }
For Non-Members. }

Philosophy and Mysticism.—I

By

Dr. R. DAS.

I believe the purpose of this symposium is to discuss the relation between philosophy and mysticism, more particularly, to ascertain whether there is a place for mysticism in philosophy, and if there is, what it is or should be. In this discussion I wish to uphold the negative position that there is no place for mysticism in philosophy and that philosophy cannot discharge its function satisfactorily if it allies itself with mysticism. In order to make my position clear, I must explain what I understand by philosophy and what by mysticism. Unless we clearly know the meanings of the terms themselves, any relation asserted between them will not be quite intelligible.

I know that the term 'philosophy' does not connote the same identical meaning for all philosophers. In such a case what I can do is to adopt a meaning which commends itself to me and which in my opinion is likely to command the largest amount of agreement among genuine students of philosophy. By philosophy then I understand a thinking consideration of things by which we seek to obtain a knowledge of reality in its entirety. It is a theoretical activity of the mind persistently pursued with the sole object of obtaining a view of reality which will be free from self-contradiction as well as able to explain all the acknowledged facts of life and the world. Two points are important here. The knowledge we get in philosophy must be, first, about reality as a whole and, secondly, obtained by rational thinking. We have rational

thinking in logic, mathematics and science, but the knowledge we get in these is not about reality as a whole. We are offered such knowledge, i.e. knowledge about reality as a whole, by religion, but this knowledge is not obtained by rational thinking. The word mysticism too, as used in common speech, is of very uncertain connotation as Mr. Rufus M. Jones admits in his article on the same subject in the *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*. But he thinks it better to use the word for 'the historic doctrine of the relationship and potential union of the human soul with the ultimate reality and to use the term mystical experience for direct intercourse with God.' He points out that mysticism in this sense 'implies a certain metaphysical conception of God and of the soul and it implies further a mystic way of attaining union with the absolute.' This appears substantially to be the view of McTaggart according to whom 'what is asserted by mysticism is, firstly, a mystic unity and secondly, a mystic intuition of that unity.' The mystic believes in a unity which allows no division or difference anywhere in reality and further thinks that this unity is realisable in a mystic intuition. McTaggart appears to think that the unity required by mysticism need not be absolute and may even leave room for differentiation. 'What is essential is the affirmation of a unity greater than that which is usually acknowledged.' I seem to think that the unity should be absolute. This point however is not so important for me as for McTaggart who thinks that the mystic unity is more fundamental than the mystic intuition. In my opinion the mystic intuition seems to be more important for mysticism at least, than whatever unity it may assert of reality. The assertion that there is unity in the universe or that reality is one can well be made by a student of philosophy without having anything to do with mysticism. Mysticism is not so much interested in evolving a theoretical view of the world or reality as in obtaining, or

yielding us a direct revelation of reality. The revelation, insight or intuition is more primary and fundamental than any theory that may be built upon it. The theoretical beliefs, at which mystics arrive, including that in the unity of the universe, are the result, as Russell would say, 'of reflection upon the inarticulate experience gained in the moment of insight.' The corner-stone of mysticism is this revelation or insight and the most important thing for mysticism is how to get at this revelation and not what theory to hold about the character and constitution of the universe. A certain view of reality will, no doubt, be implied by the mystic intuition, if it is held to give us the ultimate truth, but there will be nothing mystical about the view unless it is claimed to be grounded in and yielded by the mystic intuition only. Mysticism then is a way of seeing rather than a matter of theory. Miss Underhill while considering the relation of magic and mystery, asserts that both are practical. It is this practical aspect of mysticism that we are emphasising here, when we say that mysticism is concerned directly with actual seeing and not so much with propounding a theory even to the effect that all reality is one.

If what we have said so far about mysticism and philosophy is correct, then it obviously follows that philosophy and mysticism are very different things and there can be no place for mysticism in philosophy. Philosophy is a theoretical activity, mysticism is practical. Philosophy demands rational thinking, mysticism offers only non-rational feeling. A philosophical theory or conclusion has always to be justified by some rational consideration, which an intelligent man will be able to follow. The question of rational justification is absolutely irrelevant to mysticism, the mystic intuition being taken as quite ultimate and all-sufficient. Can we offer no rational justification for mysticism, for the mystic view of reality or the mystic intuition? I am inclined

to think we cannot; but even if we can, it will be at the cost of our being unfaithful to mysticism itself. To attempt to justify mysticism by rational consideration is to recognise the insufficiency of the mystic intuition to support itself and to make the mystic view dependent not on direct intuition but on logical thought, which means the denial of mysticism. It may be said that the mystic himself does not require the support of logical thought, but for the benefit of those who have not yet got the mystic insight, he may use logical arguments to demonstrate the necessity and validity of the mystic intuition. But it should be remembered that what we are interested in is not the mysticism of those who do not see its truth and have no faith in it, but the mysticism of the mystics and such mysticism, it is evident, does not need and does not offer any logical justification. To justify mysticism by logical argument is to give higher value to logical thought than to mystic insight, which is not allowed by mysticism. Thus it is clear that at least as a rule, mysticism does not offer any logical justification of itself whereas a philosophical theory, to be philosophical must always be accompanied by such justification. So we say that a philosophical theory properly so called has always some logical justification while mysticism or mystical insight has none.

Now it may be argued that although mysticism does not need any rational justification, it does not mean that it cannot be justified. What is felt to be not in need of justification is not on that account unjustifiable. I am, however, inclined to think that no rational justification of mysticism is even possible. In this connexion we should remember that to justify mysticism does not mean to justify any view of reality which mysticism happens to hold but which may also otherwise be obtained or conceived, but it means to justify a view of reality which is revealed only in a mystic intuition and which cannot otherwise be obtained or conceived or made an

object of thought. We see at once and quite clearly that there can be no possible justification by thought of a mystic view of reality. We can justify only that which we can think. Of course, whatever is thought cannot be justified. But if it is to be justified at all, it must be capable of being thought. So what cannot even be thought, obviously falls outside the pale of all rational justification. Justification means proving something to be right or true. It is necessarily a process of thinking. What cannot be brought within thought cannot possibly be justified. If you say that what is given in mystic intuition can as well be thought, you give up the mystic position altogether. Thus it is plain that the position of mysticism is not only unjustified but unjustifiable. We come to the same conclusion if we consider the attitude of mysticism itself towards rational thought. According to mysticism all thinking leads to error, because while truth is undifferentiated unity, no thought is possible without discrimination and division. If this is so, it is idle to imagine that thought can really justify anything, i. e. establish anything as true or right. The so-called truth of mysticism, therefore, does not and cannot admit of any rational justification. To offer it to thought for justification is to have falsified it already. As a matter of fact, the mystics also recognise this and to cover up their rational bankruptcy, they adopt the uneasy expedient of supposing that thought proves for them its own falsity and the mystic intuition justifies itself. We need only point out that nothing can be turned against itself, and that a piece of knowledge such as can be yielded by thought or intuition cannot be proved or disproved by itself.

Now the supporter of mysticism may well ask the philosopher, what system of philosophy or philosophical theory is there that is completely secure against all criticism and is fully justified by reason? There is no system of philosophy,

there is even no philosophical theory, which is accepted by all students of philosophy. This means that there is no theory which is wholly justified. Furthermore, how far can we go in a process of justification? Must we not come to a point where no further justification is necessary and we are left with something self-evident? Let us consider these two points a little.

(1) The fact that we have so far had no philosophy which is entirely satisfactory to our reason, shows only that the ideal which the philosopher follows has not yet been realised in any existing systems. This fact does not mean condemnation of the philosopher's ideal, just as the fact that there has been no perfect man, is no condemnation of the moral ideal. This fact only shows that there is yet abundant scope for the rational activity of men and that the new generations of philosophers should put forth their best efforts to realise or at least to approach the ideal. To be a philosopher is not merely to be an adherent of some existing system; the philosopher's task is rather to evolve a view of reality which is the most consistent in his judgement and which satisfies the demands of thought so far as he understands them. The fact that the philosopher does not find this view already present in any existing system in the history of philosophy does by no means condemn, but is really the motive spring of, his philosophic activity. If the pursuit of the philosophic ideal appears too arduous or even seems much like a wild goose chase to you, you may not and need not go after it. You may well be satisfied with a vision or a faith ready to your hand.

Coming to the second point, we find that it is, no doubt, true that all that commands our rational assent does not always need to be proved. The principles of logic and the judgements of immediate experience do not need any proof, because they do not raise any question. But when an asser-

tion is made about all reality, we cannot possibly accept it on the strength of the assertion itself.

When a judgement is made about a fact of our own immediate experience, we readily accept it because we immediately see its truth. May not the truth of mysticism come to us in the same immediate way? Indeed this seems to be the view of the supporters of mysticism. We get reality and realise the truth about ourselves and the universe in the absolutely immediate experience which is pure intuition. Now we may admit that in immediate experience, we have some reality and know some truth, but the reality is that of the immediate experience itself and the truth is also about the immediate experience. When anybody has an immediate experience, it is no doubt quite true that he is having that experience and his experience is there. When the mystic claims to have a peculiar kind of immediate experience, nobody need deny the fact of his such experience. Our whole difficulty is to understand how this fact can sum up all possible facts and how all reality can be concentrated into an indivisible immediate intuition. For obviously we have other immediate experiences also and beside the fact of intuition, if there be such, there are innumerable other facts which we cannot deny or ignore. We have immediate experience of our pleasures and pains and immediately see colours and hear sounds. To obviate this difficulty, the mystic endeavours to turn all these facts into no facts, in face of the supreme fact of immediate intuition and to hold that the so called immediate experiences are not immediate at all and the immediate experience is really one and absolute, which is pure intuition. But how can the facts, so long as we see them, be turned into no facts? So long as our senses function and the mind thinks, we are obliged to recognise facts of various kinds and they show no tendency to disappear from the scene to oblige the mystic. And so, in order to get rid of them, some mystics try to stop their

senses and to still their mind. But success in this endeavour is bound to be very temporary and uncertain. So the mystic has to find other means of dealing with them. And the means are principally two. (1) By arguments the mystic may try to throw doubts on the evidence of sense and thought and thus render all so-called facts highly uncertain. (2) Or he may hold on to the faith that some day the nightmare of the world-illusion will pass away and he will no more be troubled by sights or sounds, thoughts or ideas. The first method is not particularly successful. All that the arguments can possibly effect is that the facts of experience are all doubtful. But to render a fact into no fact, we must be able to deny it altogether, and not merely to doubt it. And no kind of argument can lead us to the denial of a visible fact so long as we are obliged to see it, no matter however strong may be the doubt engendered by the argument in our mind as to the facthood of the thing seen. The second method appears more straight-forward and may be more effective, but the requisite faith may not and indeed is not available to us all.

Turning to the other point of the mystic that pure intuition is the only immediate experience, we find that it also leads to certain irremovable difficulties. The mystic position in this connexion is that the so-called immediate experiences are not really immediate, because they involve some kind of mediation through ideas and that pure intuition is not one immediate experience among others, all-fitting and transitory, but is the only immediate experience in reality, in which knowledge and reality are found in absolute unity. This intuition is not something yet to occur at some future date, but is already present, underlying all experience, in the inmost core of our being. But if we are already in possession of the immediate intuition, why is all this needless effort and exhortation to get at it? Can we have both immediate and mediate experience at the same time?

Since immediate experience is the only reality how can, and why should, there be an appearance of mediate experience at all? To these questions no satisfactory reply can come from the side of the mystic. He may appeal to our perversity and ignorance, but that hardly serves as an answer. The fact is that the arguments we have considered are not really offered by the mystic as such, but by the would-be supporters of mysticism who would find some philosophic basis for it, but who, in fact in trying to rationalise mysticism, make it appear rather shallow and perverse. The true mystic, as I imagine, needs no support of philosophy or philosophic arguments. He is content with his illuminative insight. He, in all probability, sees the world as we see it, and may even recognise the knowledge claimed by science and common sense. But he has also a clear and convincing intuition into some deeper unity of all things, which strikes him as all-important. Thus while he would recognise the existence of external things and of our everyday-knowledge, he would only say that by the side of his intuited reality, the reality of external things pales into insignificance and the so-called knowledge is no better than ignorance. He would say so not on the strength of any reasoning but only on the sole strength of an overpowering feeling, which he does not and cannot simply question. He goes even so far as to say that this is the highest good. We clearly see that the mystic does not use the words reality, knowledge and good in their ordinarily accepted meanings. Reality for him is not what can be touched or seen; Knowledge is not apprehension through sensibility and understanding, good does not consist in virtuous conduct. When he says that the world is not real or that all our knowledge is mere ignorance, we should not understand his assertion quite literally as a statement of fact but should take it as an estimate of value. He means that from his point of view, the world or our knowledge of it is

quite unimportant. With mysticism so understood, we can have no real controversy, because controversy is possible when both the parties use common words with common meanings.

Philosophy stands for the systematisation of our common experience, and is the culminating achievement of our common understanding; mysticism, in its extreme form, stands for the abolition of understanding, and breaks away with our common experience.

We thus find that philosophy and mysticism are quite disparate things and not only is there no room for mysticism in philosophy, or for philosophy in mysticism, the two can hardly be compatible with each other, and it is idle to attempt to supply any philosophical basis for mysticism.

It is not however meant that mysticism has no value or that its value is inferior to that of philosophy. All that is meant is that the two are altogether different from each other. The interest which mysticism serves is quite other than the interest for the sake of which one takes, or should take, to philosophy.

Philosophy and Mysticism—II

By

Dr. D. G. LONDHE.

Philosophy, as I understand it, is an attempt to interpret experience. Experience is the primal fact, an undeniable datum. Yet it is equally undeniable that contents of experience are partial, fragmentary and sometimes mutually contradictory. Philosophic endeavour aims at such a constructive synthesis and interpretation of experience as to remove fragmentariness and contradictions and to present a comprehensive and consistent view of experience. To Plato philosophy was a synopsis, seeing all existence together, a Whole-View of experience. To the Indian philosophers also a system of philosophy was a 'Darshana', and the highest and the best philosophical perspective a 'Samyag-Darshana,' a view of things as they are, and not simply as they appear to be.

In popular parlance mysticism is meant to convey a vague spiritualism, an ill defined supernaturalism and a romantic occultism. Strictly speaking mysticism is a definite Weltanschauung, a particular view of reality. Mysticism is thus only a special mode of metaphysics, setting forth a clearly conceived doctrine of the nature of self and its relation to reality. Mysticism is characterised as implying a "theologico-metaphysical doctrine of the soul's possible union with absolute reality i.e. with God" ('Mysticism' in *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*.) On its practical side mysticism aims at "first-hand experience of direct intercourse with God", God being conceived as the highest reality. The practical aim and endeavour of the mystic are justified only against the theoretical background

of the doctrine of the consubstantiality of soul with God, of self with reality. Essentially heterogeneous entities cannot be unified even by the magic of mystic experience. If it is urged that the union of the homogeneous is meaningless and superfluous, we point out that as long as the knowledge of unity and consubstantiality has not dawned, the endeavour for the union is significant and necessary. It is possible that this realisation of the unity takes the form of a removal of a mistaken sense of separateness.

If we understand philosophy as an attempt to interpret experience, and mysticism as a particular doctrine of the nature and relation of soul and God, self and reality, with an inevitable practical endeavour consequent upon the theoretical belief, our position as regards the question of the relation between philosophy and mysticism is this that though philosophy and mysticism can be distinguished from each other, there is not sufficient ground to suppose that they are 'quite disparate things'; nor can it be urged with convincing cogency that "the two are hardly compatible with each other".

Let us consider the arguments of those who would like to sharply separate philosophy from mysticism. Usually the strongest argument of the 'separatists' is in effect like the following: Philosophy is based on reason, while mysticism is based on intuition. In other words, reason is the faculty of philosophy, while intuition is the faculty of mysticism. Now, such a differentiation between philosophy and mysticism would stand or fall with the soundness or otherwise of the distinction between reason and intuition. A relic of the old-fashioned faculty psychology, such a distinction, between the faculty of reason and faculty of intuition, certainly stands, to-day, discredited and condemned. We cannot speak significantly in modern times of a faculty of reason separated from the faculty of intuition. It may easily be conceded; that we may

still employ the terms reason and intuition as a practical convenience of treatment and for the expediency of exposition. It must, nevertheless, be clearly remembered that the distinction between reason and intuition is true only in a relative sense, and not in an absolute sense. It is a difference of degree only and not of kind. Intuition is but another name for the higher reaches of intellect or reason. Or to put it in another way, Intuition is a rational conclusion with the premises suppressed. Intuition is, probably, unconscious reason, potential intellect. In what is generally known as an intuitive apprehension, the discursive elements will, on retrospection, be found to be invariably present in an implied form, though not explicitly expressed. As Dean Inge has rightly emphasised, the mystic "has no interest in appealing to a faculty 'above reason', if reason is used in its proper sense, as the logic of the whole personality" (*Christian Mysticism* P. 19). The "logic of the whole personality" is not exhausted by reason to the exclusion of intuition, it has room to accommodate intuition, besides reason. The contrariety and exclusiveness between reason and intuition are more apparent than real. With the abolition of a fundamental and absolute distinction between reason and intuition, the vaunted water-tight separation of philosophy and mysticism shall have to be abandoned.

Further, it might be urged by the separatists that philosophy is theoretical, while mysticism is practical. A little reflection will show that such a demarcation is but roughly and superficially true. No activity is purely theoretical. Cognition inevitably tends to be conative. Even philosophical striving must be oriented to some end, unless it is allowed to degenerate into mere intellectual pastime. Philosophical activity is certainly one of the means of realising the end of human existence in whichever way it may be conceived. It will be conceded that philosophy at least contributes to the

intellectual progress of mankind. Progress is undoubtedly the end and goal of human existence. In all the systems of Indian philosophy an attempt has been made to orient philosophical striving towards the realisation of the *summum bonum* conceived as spiritual salvation. In modern times no philosopher is particular about the salvation of his soul. Not because he would allow his soul to be damned, but because the ideal of individual salvation has been substituted by the ideal of social salvation, and salvation in a religious sense has ceased to appeal to us. The ideal of progress is, however, valid even for a philosopher and demands a contribution from him. In this broader perspective it may be said that philosophy is not purely and exclusively a theoretical activity but seeks to serve some ulterior end of man's duty to discover truth. Just as philosophy is not purely theoretical, mysticism is not purely practical. A mystic is no doubt interested in a first-hand experience of reality, a direct intercourse with God. This direct, immediate, first-hand apprehension of God is a personal experience, an event in the psychic history of the mystic; yet it can hardly be denied that a preparation and an approach for such a consummation imply a very definite theory of the nature of self and its relation to God. There is a very clearly conceived theoretical foundation upon which the structure of the mystic's practical endeavour rests. Thus the statement that philosophy is theoretical and mysticism is practical cannot be accepted without reservation. Knowledge of reality inevitably results in the realisation of reality and the realisation of reality must necessarily be preceded by the knowledge of reality. When the Upanishadic philosopher asserted that 'Brahmavid Brahmaiva bhavati' he simply assured us of the naturalness, logicity and the inevitability of the process by which philosophy passes into mysticism and mysticism is preceded by a philosophic propaedeutic. Every theoretical activity tends to be practical in some sense, and every practical endeavour is supported by

theoretical considerations, and philosophy and mysticism are no exceptions.

What is the relation of logic to mysticism ? Has logic a place in mysticism ? Has logic any value for mysticism ? These questions raise a problem whose discussion is sure to shed clarifying light on the relation of philosophy and mysticism. It might be said that logic is vital for philosophy, but unnecessary and even harmful for mysticism, and that rational justification for a philosophical theory is essential, while for mysticism rational justification is altogether irrelevant. If by logic we mean consistency, logic is vital for philosophy, and it is impossible to conceive a system of philosophy without logic. Both for presentation of one's theories, and for the refutation of rival theories of opponents, logic is indispensable. But if by logic we mean apotheosis of reason, infallibility of reason and the adequacy of reason to know reality, logic is not vital for philosophy, for there have been philosophers who have called in question the infallibility and the adequacy of reason to lead us to truth. What is particularly noteworthy is that they asserted this belief as a philosophical proposition and not as a mystic's personal opinion. When Sankara stigmatised logical reasoning as baseless, he was not committing a philosophical suicide, but was seeking to save philosophy from the vagaries of word-quibbles and the vanity of wanton dialectics, and thus to place philosophy securely on the bed-rock of experience. A similar attitude towards discursive thinking is noticeable in Bergson, Klages, supporters of the so-called philosophy of life, and the metaphysics of irrationalism. Thus it is possible not to put absolute faith in logic as an instrument in the philosophical search of truth.

The next question is : Is logical justification irrelevant to mysticism ? That mysticism is not divorced from logic may be shown by pointing out that mysticism does not disregard the laws, the concepts, the categories and the rules of syllogistic

reasoning. Even mysticism cannot afford to violate the laws of Identity and Non-Contradiction. For the mystic also A is A, and A is not not-A. The mystic will not dare to commit the fallacies of reasoning forbidden by logic. But the mystic while duly honouring the laws of the logic of the intellect, cannot help feeling the fragmentariness and the inadequacy of that logic. The logic of the intellect does not exhaust the critical consideration of the law-abiding and the systematic character of the human psyche. The logic of reason is but a part of the logic of man's integral being. The logic of intuition should supplement the logic of intellect. It must be said to the credit of mysticism that it recognises the logic of Intuition in addition to the logic of Intellect. But the logic of Intuition is yet to be written. Traditional logic, the logic founded by Aristotle and developed by the Scholastics is merely a truncated logic. What we need is a logic of the whole personality of man, a logic that will co-ordinate reason, intuition and will. The plausibility of the contention that mysticism is divorced from logic is to be traced to the narrow conception of logic. Moreover mysticism is concerned with ultimate reality, and if ultimate reality transcends the bounds of reason, mysticism at best would be alogical and not illogical. Mysticism cares little for the logic that circles in the blind alleys of the categories of the understanding and longs for the logic that leads straight to reality, demands a dialectic that 'pastures the soul in the meadows of Truth' (Dean Inge: *Philosophy of Plotinus*. P. 4.). That ultimate reality is inaccessible through logic alone is forcibly expressed by Willian James in the following words: "Reality, life, experience, concreteness, immediacy, use what word you will, exceeds our logic, overflows and surrounds it. If you like to employ words eulogistically, you may say that reality obeys a higher logic, or enjoys a higher rationality" (*Pluralistic Universe*. P. 21.). Inspired by Bergson's writings, he makes a significant confession when

James says "For my part, I have finally found myself compelled to give up the logic, fairly, squarely and irrevocably. It has an imperishable use in human life, but that use is not to make us theoretically acquainted with the essential nature of reality," (Ibid)

As regards the alleged irrelevance of rational justification so far as mysticism is concerned, it must be remembered that it is no more irrelevant for the mystics to adduce reasons for what they believe about the relation of God and soul, than it is irrelevant for the philosophers to develop arguments in support of their beliefs as regards the nature and relation of the ultimate metaphysical entities. There are philosophers who maintain that reality is non-rational and yet they offer rational justification for this non-rational reality. But we do not accuse them of irrelevance or inconsistency for their procedure. For similar reasons we shall not be justified if we object to the mystics for rational justification of their position. And the supposed inconsistency is of the same spurious variety as the inconsistency if any, in the *tu quoque* argument against agnosticism. To meet the agnostic with the objection that "you cannot maintain that reality is unknowable, because you show sufficient knowledge of reality to be able to assert at least that much about reality," is to coerce him into enforced silence. As gagging is not convincing, even so the charge of inconsistency against a rational justification of mysticism is not convincing simply because it would reduce mysticism to mumness. And the mystics have never kept silence about their experiences, but have communicated them to the world, theorised about them, justified their unimpeachable validity. In reply to the contention of the critics, viz., any attempt to justify mysticism must be made at the cost of a favourite, complacent belief of the self-sufficiency of the mystic intuition, mystics and their supporters will point out that justification in such cases is not to be construed as being intended to make

up deficiencies and overcome short comings in the mystic intuition. Rational justification is an unhappy word to express what simply purports to be communication, explication, exposition or interpretation. The consideration that such an exposition is not necessary for the mystic himself, and if he undertakes an exposition for others such an activity is extra-mystical, superfluous and for our purposes altogether beside the point, is only an awkward way of reasoning in the form of dilemmas and hence inherently fallacious like all dilemmas. It is like asking why should a mystic write about his mystical experiences at all? But we must realise that it is unphilosophical to ask why does a philosopher philosophise at all? Just as we cannot prove the futility of philosophical activity by urging that it is neither necessary for the philosopher himself, for he knows his own position nor is it necessary for others, because as a philosopher he is not concerned with those who are non-philosophers, even so we cannot urge that an exposition of mystical experience detracts from the validity and self sufficiency of the mystical experience. The truth is that what is known in intuition may legitimately and without any inconsistency be expressed in rational thinking. There is absolutely no contrariety or exclusiveness between intuition and reason. Even if it might be held that rational thinking is not only unnecessary but positively harmful for the production of mystical intuition, it does not follow that ratiocinative processes are not possible or desirable after the occurrence of the mystical intuition. What intuition sees in a flash, reason may subsequently explain, justify, interpret at leisure. This procedure is not peculiar to mysticism, but is common to philosophy and science. Philosophy is nothing, if it is not a vision of truth. Without this vision, the writing of volumes on philosophical subject is all perspiration and no inspiration. The importance of vision in a philosopher was well-recognised by Plato in ancient times and by William

James in modern times. The formation of hypothesis in scientific investigation is a matter of intuition. Proofs, demonstrations and verifications by observations and experiments come later. This is rational exposition of intuitive apprehension which precedes it. Thus it is clear that there is no incompatibility or antagonism between intuition and reason and hence the thesis that mysticism is unjustifiable by rational arguments falls to the ground.

Writings of mystics, whether in the East or West go against the statement that mysticism is not, or cannot be justified. Plotinus justified his mysticism on the basis of a philosophy revived from Platonism. He regards the world of sense, the phenomenal world unreal and ascribes reality to the spiritual world alone. The two worlds may not be sundered apart as with a hatchet, but the differentiation lies in the metaphysical values. Such a view is strikingly akin to the philosophy of Advaitism. Advaitism presents a world-view which in some aspects resemble mysticism. The reality of the Self, the identification of the self and the Absolute, the unreality of the world, and the emphasis laid on the true knowledge of the Self being indistinguishable from the realisation of the reality have led some people to regard Advaitism more as mysticism than as philosophy. It is of the highest importance to remember in this connection that the Advaita Vedanta is essentially a system of philosophy, following a well-recognised logico-epistemological method. The fact that it accepts experience (Anubhuti) alongside logic as a criterion of truth should not embarrass us simply because this experience is not a supernatural experience accessible only to the select few but it is an experience which is common and universal, one for which all are eligible and which is the basis, the starting-point and the ultimate reference in all the divergent theoretical constructions in interpretation. The Advaita as a system of philosophy is complete and self-

sufficient and does not need mystical experience as its support and verification. Yet it is possible that some advaitic philosophers after their intellectual convictions might have experienced moments of beatific feeling of Unity. Strictly speaking, this is outside the four-corners of the philosophy of Advaitism, as the enjoyment of a feeling of the realisation of Reality is something other than a search of truth through reason. And yet a monistic-idealistic interpretation of experience is very favourable as a preliminary condition for the production of a direct, intuitive, apprehension of Reality. The urge after the One will not be complete and fruitful in some natures, unless that One alone ultimately becomes the pervasive content of consciousness. The logical negation of the many will be followed by the emotional or rather intuitive realisation of the One.

Just as modern science in the hands of Eddington, James Jeans and Russell tends towards metaphysics, even so modern metaphysics may tend towards mysticism. The point of view of Science being purely descriptive needs to be supplemented by the point of view of philosophy; similarly the point of view of philosophy being purely intellectual and discursive needs to be supplemented by the mystical intuition. Thus in a sense mysticism is the culmination and fulfilment of the interpretation of experience offered by philosophy. The passage from the point of view of philosophy to the intuitive illumination in mysticism is a transition not simply from one part of experience to another part of experience but a transition from the point of view of the parts to the point of view of the whole. The whole is not a mere summation of the parts, but the ground and substratum of the parts. This is probably the reason why the mystical intuition appears to contradict and nullify the philosophical knowledge. In reality the mystical illumination fills in the lacunæ in the intellec-

tive grasp of existence and in completing the picture transforms the perspective of looking at experience.

Bertrand Russell in his "*Religion and Science*" has tried to evaluate, from the scientific standpoint, the evidence in support of mysticism (Vide Ch. on "Mysticism" in *Religion and Science*). Objective verification of a scientific hypothesis consists in the universality of the conditions under which the results are observable. When the proper instruments are employed and certain conditions are fulfilled, any observer is eligible to see the results. For example, if an astronomical phenomenon is to be observed, given favourable atmospheric conditions and a sufficiently powerful and a well-adjusted telescope, any one with normal eyesight is eligible to observe the phenomenon in question. Now Russell raises the question: Is such a universality and objectivity possible as regards the mystic experience? He answers the question in the negative. He finds that curiously enough mysticism demands a change in the observer himself and not in the instrument. The adjustments, he assumes, required in the observer are sometimes enjoined in the form of fasting, breathing exercises etc. But then the experiences brought about by such preliminaries would be abnormal and would cease to have any objective and universal validity. To quote his own words, "From the scientific point of view we can make no distinction between the man who eats little and sees heaven and the man who drinks much and sees snakes." (*Religion and Science*. P. 188). Such attempts to evaluate mysticism from the scientific point of view and the criticism occasioned by them, are due, I submit, to the gratuitous assumptions made as regards the preliminaries and to a failure to understand the real nature of the mystic experiences. While it is true that the mystic experience is unusual and rare, it does not follow that it is abnormal. The conditions of fasting, breathing exercises etc. belong to a lower, vulgar kind of

mysticism and do not come into consideration with regard to the higher kind of mysticism which we are here considering. It is a variety of mysticism associated in the popular mind with occultism, Yogism and supernaturalism. It is not the mysticism of Plotinus, and Ekhart, Dnyanadeva and Ramkrishna. It must be remembered that the mystics do claim objective validity and universality for the mystic experience. Obviously the evidential value cannot be judged by the canons of legal evidence as Russell seeks to do, as in the very nature of the case they are inapplicable. When the mystic claims to have experienced illumination, the validity of the experience is vouchsafed by the fact that his intellectual doubts are solved and contradictions are removed, and further what is more to the point, there is no other experience which contradicts his illumination. If non-contradiction is a criterion of truth, mystics' experience must be accepted as true. The only peculiarity arising out of the nature of the case is that the mystic alone is competent to judge the validity of his experience. The non-mystic cannot pronounce a judgment of subjectivity and invalidity on the mystic's experience, simply because the latter contradicts the former, just as the experience of the man under illusion cannot prove the falsity of the experience of the man who sees the reality behind the illusion, simply because the former contradicts the latter. Mystic's intuition should not be regarded as a mere matter of feeling or emotion. Feeling may be distinguished from reason but may not be disparate from or incompatible with reason. One can experience an emotion about what he is convinced through reason. There is no inherent opposition and contrariety between feeling and reason, though at times they are opposed to each other. Mystic's feeling or emotion may not be divorced from reason. As Tuckwell says "Mysticism is a sublime rational immediacy, in which the elements of thought and feeling, after being

diverged and distinguished in our reflective, self-conscious mind, meet and harmoniously blend once more" (*Religion and Reality*, p. 311).

Science corrects and completes the picture of the world as seen through the senses. Philosophy carries the process of synthesis a step further than science. If philosophy is to attempt a constructive synthesis and a harmonising interpretation of experience, it must take into consideration mystic experience also. The mystic intuition accomplishes the task of filling up the lacunæ if any left in the philosophical synthesis and interpretation. And it is for philosophy, understood in the widest sense, that the task of reconciling reason and intuition is significant in the highest degree.

Our position, then, is this that philosophy and mysticism can be distinguished from each other, but they are not disparate from and incompatible with each other. There is no convincing reason why we should regard them as two watertight and windowless compartments. We can very well conceive of a passage from philosophy to mysticism and from mysticism to philosophy. Philosophy may, though not must, lead to mysticism, and mysticism may find expression in philosophy, as, for example, in Plotinus. In a comprehensive spiritual science (*Geisteswissenschaft*) of the nature and relation of man to reality, philosophy and mysticism may well be harmonised as mutually complementary disciplines.

Philosophy and Mysticism—III

BY

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The problem of the relation between philosophy and mysticism, to my mind, resolves itself into two questions: firstly, whether there is a place for philosophy in mysticism, and, secondly, whether there is a place for mysticism in philosophy. The first question raises at least four distinct, though connected, issues. Is there any place for thought on the mystic path? What is the relation between reason and the mystic intuition? Does mysticism involve a special philosophical point of view? And, is there any place for rational justification in mysticism? The second question, likewise, raises at least two important issues? Does an alliance with mysticism deteriorate philosophy? And, does mystic experience carry with it any philosophical significance or value?

That there is a place for thought on the mystic path can hardly be denied. It is true that thought necessarily involves discrimination and division, while truth, to the mystic, is an undifferentiated unity. This might incline one to imagine that according to mysticism all thinking must lead to error and that therefore all thought must be negated on the mystic path. But it must be remembered, firstly, that all search after truth must start with the pre-intuitive state of man's mind, which is naturally rational. Placed as he is within the circle of thought, there is no other way for the seeker but to approach the mystic end with the starting point, and on the lines, of thought. That is why the first stage on the

path for all mysticism is an essentially intellectual discipline consisting in a resolution of one's metaphysical doubts and uncertainties with the help of fully developed reasoning powers. In fact the greater part of the mystic's journey is covered by 'the negative path' which is essentially characterised by a rational sceptical critique of all categories of ordinary experience resulting in a conclusion of the illusoriness of the external world. Secondly, it should be remembered that such an unavoidably rational approach need not condemn the seeker to error altogether. For, though the function of thought is differentiation, what it differentiates is reality itself. Moreover, thought not merely differentiates, it also attempts to unite. It seeks to predicate content to reality, although the content would never be brought to completely signify the nature of reality. It may not be able to give perfect absolute truth. But it can certainly give us some hints, some clues to the nature of truth and the way to its immediate realisation. And, lastly, thought, while differentiative in function, is necessarily characterised by a peculiar self-transcendence. No content is self-consistent or satisfactory but leads to another content. And likewise thought itself appears always to demand an other. In its attempts to determine the nature of reality, it must reach a stage beyond which it must go by a self-transcendence into the supra intellectual, the mystical.

When this stage is reached, it is true, the search after ideal definition comes at an end and intellectual unrest obtains its satisfaction. Yet, the intellect has still to play a part even at this stage on the mystic path. For the intuitive vision which the mystic has attained must find expression in language, verbal or otherwise, while all language, manifestly, is a creation of the intellect.

That rational thinking can occupy no place in mysticism may be suggested sometimes by the fact that the mystic does

often seem to flout the logical laws of identity and non-contradiction. He does often make contradictory assertions about the absolute. He calls it, for instance, at the same time existent and non-existent, with form and without form, and the like. Such paradoxical assertions on the part of the mystic, however, as I have already shown in an earlier paper,¹ involve no self-contradiction in their meaning, but form only one of the several ways in which the mystic attempts to express the fundamental epistemic principle of the ineffability of mystic experience. For all they intend is only to emphasize that while no category is adequate enough to express the truth of mystic realisation, all categories, taken each in its own perhaps unusual and oblique manner, do fundamentally characterise it, however incompatible they might, taken logically, be among themselves, and that in this sense even mutually contradictory categories which may be equally denied may also be equally affirmed of the same reality. Here, as in all types of expressions of mysticism, the fundamental principle is ineffability and the motive is expression of the inexpressible.

The question whether there is anything like a logic of intuition seems to me to have no direct bearing on the problem of the place of thought in mysticism. It appears hardly likely that a logic of intuition can ever be actually written. But this much seems evident that even if it were possible, it would be so different from and perhaps opposed to the logic of the intellect not only in method but even in problem, attitude and terminology that it would be absurd to apply to both of them the same name 'logic' unless it loses all significance

1. Loomba : Doctrine and Expression in Mysticism, (*Proceedings of The Twelfth Indian philosophical Congress*, 1936. Also, *The Philosophical Quarterly* Vol. XIII, No 1, April, 1937)

whatsoever. The conception of a logic which would coordinate reason, intuition and will involves a fundamental contradiction which would be apparent when we come to discuss the relation between reason and mystic intuition. A satisfaction of the whole personality can, it seems to me, be possible only through a philosophy of life. And it is essentially a philosophy of life that mysticism claims to offer us.

What is, then, the relation between mystic intuition and reason? There is a prevalent tendency to maintain an opposition between them by asserting that mysticism stands for the abolition of understanding and describing it as offering only non-rational feeling or sometimes as practical rather than theoretical. All such descriptions, however, virtually attribute to mysticism a nature quite foreign to its own. For mysticism claims to surmount the entire antithesis between thought and feeling and between theory and practice. In fact mystic intuition is said to transcend all distinctions of feeling, thought and action lying at the basis of the empirical level of consciousness. It stands thus in as much contrast to one of them as to the other two. All three are equally fragmental and one-sided. Yet all the three are held to be equally dissolved into the unity of mystic experience. It follows that for mysticism neither one of the triad of opposites can be said to be more basic or fundamental than the others. Mysticism, therefore, may not be viewed either as opposed or even as organically related to reason but only as a consummation in which reason as well as action and feeling all find their dissolution. It is true that mystics have refused to regard their peculiar experience as intellectual comprehension. But what they speak of as contemplation or meditation involves in a particularly unique form both the elements of cognitive attention as well as affective and conative elements. It involves an element of ecstasy which however is not simply rapture but has a warmth of intimate understanding with it.

It has an element of activity which however does not intend action to be performed upon an object but seeks to merge itself into it as a way of gaining insight into its essential nature. Likewise it involves a knowing-element which however is free from the dualisms and inconsistencies of discursive thought.

For another reason, too, I cannot see how mystic intuition can be described as feeling or emotion. Here I must reiterate what I have already said in an earlier paper while discussing the relation between intuition and emotion.² Intuitivism is essentially an epistemic principle which offers an insight that enters into the very depths of the being of the object that forms its content. But emotion, in spite of its*absorbing character, is essentially a psychological disposition rather than an epistemic attitude and must therefore be transcended if a really intuitive insight is to be obtained. In fact while intuition is always meaningful, it cannot be said that it is essentially emotional. No doubt ecstatic emotion might result from intuition ; it might be its constant accompaniment or implication. But it cannot be asserted to be its necessary condition. It is quite natural perhaps that intuitive knowledge, by its absolute and unique character, should express itself in ecstasy. We can then say that because of knowledge there is ecstasy. But it is manifestly absurd that ecstasy can at all be a necessary condition of knowledge, that the emotional character of an experience can be the essential basis of its value as insight. True, we often come across such expressions in mystic writings as 'feeling the presence of God'. But such expressions do not mean, as it is sometimes

2. Loomba : Emotional Intuitivism in Axiology (*Proceedings of The Twelfth Indian Philosophical Congress 1936*. Also, *The Philosophical Quarterly* Vol. XIII, No. II, July, 1937)

supposed, that a feeling the mystic has is cognitive but on the contrary that the mystic experiences a certain knowledge which produces in him certain affective reactions.

It should here be added that I do not see my way to agree with those who would maintain between intuition and reason a distinction only of degree of development and not of kind. They characterise intuition as unconscious reason, as inexplicit thought, as a rational conclusion with the premises suppressed. On this basis they maintain that reason and intuition "are always blending" and never completely separate from each other. According to them intuition, though spontaneous, "possesses also the glimmerings of reason". But the intuition thus characterised is far short of that attested to by the mystics. It is a name for either the vague undeveloped ideas that later find elaboration in complete explicit argument or for the higher reaches of the intellect where many complicated processes of thought are carried out in the back chambers of the mind, the subconscious and the unconscious. It is sometimes described as 'akin to instinct' where in effect it is conceived as but instinct itself. The mystic intuition, on the other hand, comes out of the spiritual nature of man with an authority superior to any which intellect can confer.

Does mysticism imply any special philosophical point of view? The fundamental aim of mysticism is evidently the same as that of philosophy, namely, to penetrate behind the veil of appearance to the ultimate reality. Now Taylor, while accepting this philosophical purpose of mysticism, maintains that "their diversity of method is no less marked than their partial community of purpose", on the ground that it is negative, that it is symbolic, and that it does not seek to give appearances their place in the scheme of reality.³ On this

3. Taylor : *Elements of Metaphysics* (1926), pp. 13-15.

basis one might maintain an incompatibility between mysticism and philosophy and thus the impossibility of any philosophy in mysticism. But the incompatibility is more apparent than real. For, though mysticism might be negative in the discipline which it prescribes for its initiates, or as often, in its characterisation of the reality known therein, it offers yet a positive experience of absolute truth as a result of the discipline, of which the negativistic description is perhaps the best account in the conceptualistic terms of language. Moreover, philosophy, too proceeds most often by a negative path in the shape of the method of initial scepticism which since Descartes expressly and since Socrates implicitly has almost insistently adopted. Even in regard to expression and formulation of conclusions, most of the terms in which we couch our positive statements in philosophy receive at best but negative definitions. No less, again, is philosophy symbolic. Almost all our philosophical terminology, though used to express abstruse concepts, are mainly drawn from the ordinary language of the spatial world. Only, the philosopher's symbols belong ordinarily to the scientific sphere, while the mystic often considers aesthetic symbols to be expressive to a greater degree of the ultimate nature of reality. And, finally, regarding appearances and their place in the entire scheme of reality, we must note that, according to the mystics, on the attainment of the intuitive experience, all appearances, finite objects and fragmentary views of the universe lose their being as such and are re-integrated into and reinterpreted in the light of the illumination received. They therefore stand at, and exist only for, the lower stages on way to the attainment of mystical intuition. In this sense, appearances find their proper place in mysticism not as existences but as various lower stages of consciousness, as the ways in which at these stages consciousness interprets reality. And this seems to me to be a solution to the prob-

lem which avoids the objection of double existence *as such* and *as belonging to the whole* raised against the absolutist doctrine by William James with so much force and cogency.⁴

Mysticism, then, in no way falls short of the general nature of philosophy. Even where it mocks philosophy, as it often does, it is only carrying out its eternal mission of protesting against the abstraction of philosophical thought from concrete life and immediate experience, and there indeed it is truly philosophic. For, in rejecting what it points out to be but pseudo-philosophy, it claims to give us what most truly deserves the name. While thus it will never reconcile itself to being called mere philosophy, mysticism certainly always has a philosophy. As such it has both a theoretical and a practical aspect, and the theoretical aspect consists of both a metaphysics and a theory of knowledge. It is these two that McTaggart has called the mystic unity and the mystic intuition respectively.⁵ I entirely agree with the current view, against McTaggart, that of these two it is the mystic intuition and not the mystic unity which should be regarded as more fundamental to mysticism. I, however, also think that the mystic unity is hardly adequately characterised by McTaggart. Assertion of "a greater unity in the universe than that recognised in ordinary experience or in science" may not amount to more than a monism and cannot be said to be peculiar to mysticism. Monism signifies only a metaphysical unity within reality. The metaphysical unity characteristic of mysticism is, on the other hand one that may be called a unity between reality and appearance, between the empirical and the trans-empirical. The mystic maintains that the trans-empirical reality pervades the empirical universe

4. James : *A Pluralistic Universe*.

5. McTaggart : *Philosophical Studies, Ch. on Mysticism*.

through and through, that in every empirical fact, there shines out and glows, as it were, a 'great fact', that in every thing we see there is a hidden meaning if one could but understand it. This principle of mysticism may be further combined with the principle of the unity of the ultimate reality behind each empirical appearance as one and the same. But it is the former alone that gives mystic metaphysics its peculiar character.

Nor can we accept McTaggart's contention that the mystic intuition is to be regarded as one example of the mystic unity. For, one being a metaphysical and the other an epistemic principle, they occupy each a different place in mystic philosophy and neither can be said to be an example of the other. McTaggart's contention seems to me to result from a confusion between the epistemic subject-object identity involved in mystic intuition and the metaphysical identity of the individual self as the knower and the reality as the known, which no doubt is one example of the metaphysical mystic unity described above.

This consideration would also dispose of the further conclusion based by McTaggart on this contention, namely, that the mystic intuition cannot be asserted without the mystic unity. Besides, even if it be uncritically accepted that the mystic intuition is an example of the mystic unity, it can by itself justify not the conclusion he reaches but quite its opposite. An example is only a particular application of a wider principle which therefore is not possible without first establishing the general principle itself. Apart from that, moreover, assertion of the mystic intuition is only the formulation of a way of knowing and does not imply the truth of any metaphysical principle as its prior condition. The mystic unity is a metaphysical principle the truth of which can be asserted by the mystic only on the basis of knowledge derived in the mystic intuition. In mysticism

therefore it is really the mystic unity that cannot be asserted without the mystic intuition.

Is there any place for rational justification in mysticism? Justification of mysticism may mean either justification of the mystic view of reality or justification of the mystic view of knowledge. Thus it may be sought to establish the same metaphysical view of reality which is held by mysticism independently of appeal to mystic experience and by rational argument alone. Or, again, it may be sought to establish the necessity or value of mystic intuition as a way of knowing reality. Now the nature of reality, according to mysticism, it is true, cannot be conceived in terms of thought. Nor does it admit of any adequate description in language, the reasons for which I have elsewhere analysed ⁶ and need not be dwelt upon here at length. Mystic truth is infinite, of an enrapturing quality, characterised essentially by subject-object identity and unknowable by the categories of the intellect. Yet, what for sake of others, and what as a spontaneous outlet for the ecstasy of intuition to express itself, the mystics have attempted to express the inexpressible in various possible ways. And there is nothing inconsistent in that, having adopted any particular mode of formulation of mystic truth, the mystic should proceed to show what aspects of it justified him in adopting that particular mode of its statement. Another ground on which rational justification of mysticism is asserted to be impossible is that according to mysticism all thought must lead to error, which we have already shown above to be an entirely wrong notion about mysticism.

The possibility of justification of the mystic view of knowledge depends upon the fact that thought may recognise its

6. Loomba : *The Silence of the Mystics* (Triveni, Vol. X, No. 5. November, 1937).

own weaknesses and lead on to intuition. Against this has been urged the consideration that nothing can be turned against itself, that a piece of knowledge such as can be yielded by thought cannot be proved or disproved by itself. We may, however, point out that in a rational justification of the mystic view of knowledge it is really thought as a way of knowing that would pronounce upon the truth or falsity of a piece of knowledge about itself, and that no question arises therefore of turning any piece of knowledge against itself.

One last point remains to be considered in this connection. One may argue that to justify mysticism by argument is to give higher value to thought than to intuition. But since the justification by a mystic even of his own mysticism is meant for those who have not yet attained the intuitive experience there is no way but to utilise the thing of lesser value for what it is worth in the earlier stages of the enquirer's path. Moreover, it is never claimed that argument would be able to give a complete proof of mysticism. Its function is simply to incline one to it. That is why, for instance, in Sufism even after the stage of resolution of the seeker's doubts by a rational argument is passed, he is called only a 'murid' or 'one who is inclined'. Besides, even if complete proof were possible, it would not decrease in the least the value of intuition. For our knowledge of the complete proof for any fact by argument may give us reasons to believe in the fact but can never amount to a knowledge directly of the fact itself. To be convinced of a truth is one thing, to see it, in intuition, 'face to face' is quite another.

Foregoing considerations should be sufficient to disillusion those who fear deterioration of philosophy from its having anything to do with mysticism. For it is sometimes believed that mysticism belongs to a low, immature and primitive stage of intellectual development and that therefore it is not

possible for philosophy to discharge its function properly if it allies itself with mysticism. Listening thus to contemporary detractors of mysticism, one might imagine that philosophy has accomplished its emancipation from the primitive but imposing self-deceptions which it attributes to mysticism. The truth, on the other hand, is rather that all those philosophers who have initiated the greatest strides in the progress of philosophy have been men charged with some sort of a mystical element in them. The mystical character of all the six great systems of Indian philosophy would naturally be the first to occur to our mind in this connection. The history of foreign philosophy also bears out the same fact. We read thus in ancient philosophy of Socrates' drawing inspiration from what he called his 'dæmon', Plato's artistic conception of thought, Aristotle's view of knowledge par excellence as a super-logic which is not *about* but *of* the really real, and Plotinus' long descriptions of the vision in which epistemic identity reigns supreme along with his admissions of his own mystic experiences. In modern philosophy we find Descartes building the whole super-structure of his system on a mystical intuition of the self, Spinoza harping on a concrete intuitive insight as the highest grade of knowledge, and Kant basing religion and ethics on revelations of a mystical conscience and, in his theoretical philosophy, hovering between intuition and the transcendental unity of apperception. The mystical element also characterised great rationals of France like Pascal, Malebranche, and Comte. There is a fundamental mysticism even in Hegel which though it has not yet been adequately recognised has now begun to attract some notice. He has indeed even called himself a mystic ¹. We read also of Nietzsche's

7. *Encyclopadie der Philosophischen Wissenschaften*,
2 Auflage, Zusatz §821.

mystical visions⁸ and of McTaggart's mystical experiences which he used to describe as the 'soul feeling' besides his definitely mystical characterisations of the absolute.'⁹ Bradley's basic mysticism I have myself tried to bring out in a work published recently.¹⁰ The mystic inspiration of Bergson and James is only too well known. Whitehead also reveals some sort of a mystical ring in him when he describes the task of philosophy as an attempt to express as clearly as possible a dim penumbral consciousness which, he says, is yet beyond exact definition."¹¹ But, then, examples would never come to an end.

Let us now come to the question whether mystic experience can carry with it any philosophical significance or value. Contemporary discussion of the issue centres round the consideration of the purely personal origin of mystic experience. Thus one may hesitate to grant an ultimate value to mystic experience on the basis of the observation that Christian mysticism centres round Christ, Shaivite round Shiva and Kali, Vaishnavite round Vishnu and so on.¹² The philosophical value of mystic experience may likewise be questioned on the ground that if it possessed absolute authority, its earliest expressions would have become permanent, while as a matter of fact the old has, in this field too, given place to the new. And it has been asked: "How can there be a discarding of any intuition howsoever ancient? Must men

8. Nietzsche : *Thus Spake Zarathustra*, Part III.

9. McTaggart : *Studies in Hegelian Cosmology* ;
Dickinson : J. McT. E. McTaggart (1931), pp. 92-98.

10. Loomba : *Bradley and Bergson* (Lucknow University Philosophical Studies No. 1), 1937.

11. Whitehead : *Remarks* (*Philosophical Review* Vol. XLVI, No. 2. March, 1937, pp. 178-181).

12. *Contemporary Indian Philosophy*.

wait for some new and different intuition ? And if it comes, how are they to judge between the authority of the new and the old ?”¹³ It is sometimes doubted if mystic experience is not after all only a kind of mental vapour, luminous, rainbow-tinted, beautiful, but self-created, compounded out of emotion, imagination, strong individual will and rhetoric, rather than any piercing behind the veil of sense or a vision of the innermost transcendental reality.

I propose here firstly, without for the present controverting these charges wholly or in part, just to suggest that in whatever respects they may be true of mysticism, they cannot be denied of philosophy itself. It is true that the development of the mystic experience starts from the past cognitive history and the environments of a person and equally that its deliverances have changed very many times in the course of history. But, more than that, I am afraid, can not be claimed for any system of philosophy. We might, in fact, just as well ask, which of all the philosophies is not personal and peculiar to its author ? On what positive principle can philosophy, after its long panoramic history, claim a substantial uniformity ? If mystic experiences are subjective creations, of emotion, imagination, and the like, so are philosophies webs, we must admit, of speculative ideas, evolved and woven into systematic patterns, grand, sublime, but individual self creations with the help of instinctive beliefs and intellectual construction. Expressions of the philosophic spirit have been always changing with the advance of the times. They are attempts to give an appearance of rationality to pictures of the universe that happen to catch the imagination or the temperament of individual thinkers. Does not every philosopher, as even Bradley confesses, think too much of his own metaphysical constructions and ascribe to them an

13. Samuel : *Belief and Action* (1937), p. 57.

importance not their due ? Very aptly has he called philosophy 'the finding of bad reasons for what we believe upon instinct'. Indeed the search for philosophical knowledge is a search for that which is hopeless of attainment, and it remains as much of an ideal as it ever was. We talk of the philosophies as if they were complete systematic wholes, while they are all but approximate limiting conceptions, one-sided, imperfect and incomplete. We do not condemn the character of philosophy as an ideal. It is undoubtedly of great value as a motive spring for arduous activity. There would even be some justification for discrediting mysticism on this account, if the latter were to offer no more than just "faith" and "a vision ready to hand". But, as it is, mysticism, being not mere religiousness, is not content with either of these. Its claim is fundamentally a claim of definite actual attainment of an experience which, however immediate, in the arduousness of the effort required to achieve it can in no way be said to fall short of philosophy.

And it is this that as a matter of fact marks the important difference between the position of philosophy and that of mysticism. The way in which mysticism finds expression changes several times during the course of history, due to the scientific, philosophic, cultural and religious aspects of the epoch in which a mystic lives, the race and nationality to which he belongs, his social and vocational position, his personal life-history and his individual temperament and intellectual disposition. Yet, there is an undeniable uniformity in the intuitive *experiences* of all mystics of whatever age and clime. Mysticism thus takes its stand on a claim of attainment, of satisfaction, of an absolute vision of truth. Philosophy, on the other hand, is necessarily characterised by a spirit that always burns, a spirit of eternal intellectual unrest and dissatisfaction.

Nor should its supposed rarity prejudice a just consideration of mysticism as a claim of attainment. For, as a matter of

fact, mysticism is not so rare as it is sometimes supposed to be. To reject it on a ground of rarity is one of the hasty assumptions of the narrow-minded based on one's awareness of the present lack of a quality in oneself. It may be merely the presumption of the indifferent. For, in fact, mysticism can claim innumerable persons within its fold spread throughout all ages and over all climes, among all races and in all religions. As we read in a recent work by an American philosopher, mystic experience is "so widespread among the adherents of all the great religions, so persistent through the centuries and so unperturbed among endless changes of creed" that it "suggests at once—and to me with much persuasiveness—that it possesses genuine cosmic significance".¹⁴

This wide prevalence of mysticism may be sometimes discounted by those who, like Joad, having searched every nook and corner of their own consciousness, have therein found no trace of anything like a mystic experience.¹⁵ They may not deny the reality of the experience of the mystic altogether, but certainly appear to criticise the mystic for maintaining its reality as an inalienable and universal possession of the human spirit. But such heart-searchings, however sincere, hardly succeed, as I have already pointed out elsewhere,¹⁶ in disproving the mystic claim. For the mystic capacities of any particular individual here and now depend on the effort he has made to awaken, develop and bring them out. It is the most developed that, in the choice of our allegiance, should be the true and the crucial instance, not the half-developed, the immature or the perverted. We cannot, then, question the

14. Pratt : *Personal Realism* (1937), p. 336.

15. Joad : *Counter Attack from the East* (1933), pp. 75-76.

16. Loomba : *Mysticism and Modern Rationalism* (*The Zalyan Kalpataru*, Vol IV, No. 10, October, 1937)

mystic claim, if some individuals or most of us do not happen to have awakened and developed our latent mystic powers, even though the number of such individuals covers the majority of human beings. For mysticism ceaselessly harps on the fundamental importance of preparation and development for the maturing of our intuitive potentialities. So long, therefore, as mystic experience is testified to as a fact by even one individual, it remains a fact for Man in the universal, and mysticism stands unchallengeable as a universal principle of knowledge.

Another way in which the philosophical significance of mystic experience may be questioned is to proceed by showing that in it knowledge is altogether impossible. It may thus be argued that knowledge presupposes a distinction between the knower and the known, while, on the other hand, a subject-object identity is an essential feature of the mystic experience. One way to prove the untenability of this argument is to point out that it is only a narrow conception of knowledge that would restrict it to differentiative cognition. But what I would like to emphasise here is that, in my own studies of mysticism, I have found that mystic experience combines a sense of union with a sense of distinction, and that both of these characteristics are equally essential to its peculiar nature. ¹⁷

17. For instance, "union with God, in which the spirit burns with love. If it observes itself, it finds a distinction and a difference between itself and God, but where it burns it is pure and has no distinction, and that is why it feels nothing else but unity. (Ruysbroeck: *The Book of the Sparkling Stone*). And again, "Yet the creature does not become God, for the union takes place in God through grace and our homeward-turning love; and therefore the creature in its inward contemplation feels a distinction and an otherness between itself and God...the spirit feels itself to be one truth and one richness and one unity with God. Yet even here there is an

Without a sense of union, mysticism would lose its own objective, while without a sense of distinction the subject and the object would so merge that no consciousness of the union would be left. In fact, thus, consciousness of union necessarily must involve a consciousness of distinction. That is why intuitive realization of truth is not the final stage on the mystic path of unification but is followed by a further stage of actual complete absorption into the absolute reality, in which alone what remains is simply oneness.

To raise again, as an English writer has recently done, the doubt whether the silence adopted by several mystics on ultimate metaphysical questions may not after all be only an impressive way of affirming ignorance is to follow in the wake of such authors as Keith who represents Buddhism as a product of a 'barbarous age' and Buddha as "a magician of a trivial and regular kind." Testimony to the reality of mystic knowledge is not lacking even in the modern age, particularly in our own country with such glowing names in the forefront as Ramakrishna, Ramatirtha and Vivekananda. Another fact which belies the above-mentioned suspicion is that in spite of the rule of silence, we are left with a wonderfully profuse mystic literature attempting to define in several ways an experience found to be inexpressible.

An opinion has recently been expressed that rules out the possibility of a philosophical significance in mysticism by asserting that since mystic experience is something which cannot be described, the mystic is bound to talk nonsense when he describes it. It is argued that if one allows that it is impossible to define the object of mystic intuition in intelli-

essential tending forward, and therein is an essential distinction between the being of the soul and the Being of God; and this is the highest and finest distinction which we are able to feel. (Ruysbroeck : *The Seven Grades of Love*).

gible terms, one is thereby allowing that it is impossible for a sentence both to be significant and to be about God. But it should be remembered that a significant sentence need not necessarily be a definition, and, further, that metaphor, which is a favourite recourse of the mystic, certainly carries some significance though it does not satisfy the rules of definition. It must be admitted that the effort to express the inexpressible cannot but be in any case a very bad and unsuccessful effort at expression. The expression would be vague unusual, oblique, cryptic. But all the while the mystic is not unrewarded for his effort. Not even mystics among themselves but even the world at large has been found to understand these very oblique and cryptic expressions and to derive inspiration therefrom. Even indeed if significance of any expression is to be judged by its verifiability by the test of actual experience, mysticism would not be less significant, provided we do not dogmatically confine ourselves within the narrow limits of sense-experience, and provided we agree that verifiability may sometimes consist of knowledge of certain preparatory conditions which would place us in the relevant experience-situation that alone can enable us to accept the expression as true or to reject it as false.

Part II

Freedom and Authority in the Modern State ¹

By

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An estimate of the status of Freedom and Authority in the modern political world should be based on a psycho-philosophical analysis of the concepts of 'Liberty' and of 'the State'. Such an analysis is urgently demanded by two important aspects of contemporary political life. In the first instance, the ill-balanced actions of mass leaders to-day are the direct outcome of ill-conceived concepts ; and in the second place, as Professor Keynes recently pointed out, the active men of this epoch are applying the theories of men dead long ago. Political thought has not kept pace with practical activity, and so we live in a chaotic world where ultimate values seem to be but ineffective motives to human activity.

Thinkers, philosophical and sociological, who undertook the analysis of political ideas, appear to have laboured under the oppressive weight of an ill-directed start. No one in the long line of political philosophers from Spencer to Joad, not even Green or Bosanquet, has succeeded in analysing 'Liberty' clearly. The Spencerian formula for freedom is, as we are aware, a notable example of vague thinking. Mr. Walter Lippmann, the champion of 'Trans-Atlantic liberalism, achieves no greater degree of success in rehabilitating liberty, or in

1. The psychological analysis in this paper is based on a foundation of the McDougallian Hormic Theory of the human mind.

defining the 'good life' according to his 'higher law'. Under these circumstances, therefore, we propose to discard the methodology of these thinkers, who have been exploring only the superficial sociological strata of human association, and to dive deep into the psychological foundations of human organisation.

We propose to begin with authority and then lead up to a clarification of the concept of liberty. Authority is the characteristic of behaviour demanding the presence of, and the inter-relation between two persons, one of whom commands, and the other obeys. The self-assertive propensity dominates over the others in the mental structure of the former, while submission is active in the latter. If the submissive propensity is not easily stimulated in the mind of the person who is to obey, then, fear may be excited, either directly or indirectly, or an inducement might be offered in the shape of the satisfaction of some other propensity. At the present stage of human social organisation, authority operates on the level of highly developed sentiments, either by stimulating or offering hindrance to, the aesthetic, moral and religious sentiments. In any case, authority achieves its purpose by the excitation, in an inordinate degree, of the sentiment of self-regard, the master sentiment in the Western scale of values. This sentiment, comprising as it does, the propensity of self assertion as its main component, is the root of all the trouble and turmoil in the present day Western political life. Through her many and alluring disguises, personating altruism, social service and missionary zeal, self-assertion has enticed the Western mind into her fatal trap. Self-assertion, and self-regard should be annihilated, and their places taken by sympathy and Brahman-regard. The Brahman regarding sentiment, the master-sentiment in our scale of values, is the only means of escape from the disaster that is threatening the West at the present day.

Our contention is that in a properly constituted human society authority drawing its inspiration from assertion should find no place. The bond of unity in such a society should be sympathy and self-sacrifice. But at the present stage of evolution, self-assertive authority is being exercised, specially in the totalitarian states, with merciless rigour. We have, therefore, to consider what constitutes the legitimate sanction for such authority.

Authority cannot command in its own right. A self-seeking basis for authority is meaningless in political theory, and reactionary in practice. Even the dictators ruling over collectivistic states seek to justify the authority they exercise in terms of the good of the state. But *the only natural and legitimate sanction for authority in the state is the preservation of the liberty of the individual citizen.*

But liberty, as we understand the term, is very different from all the definitions of the concept that have been advanced so far in the history of political philosophy. It is not the '*laissez faire*' of liberalism; it is not merely 'opportunity for self-realisation and self-determination'; nor is it 'freedom to do your own stuff and take your own risk'. *Liberty is liberty for the achievement of the Brahman-regarding sentiment.* The action of that individual is free which is unhindered in the pursuit of the Supreme Brahman. That state fosters individual liberty which creates and maintains an environment, both physical and social, in which the citizen can, through the successive annihilation of all those propensities which find their satisfaction in the 'goods of this world', reach the true goal of life. The exercise of authority can be justified only on the ground that it seeks to guide the individual in his search for Brahman.

Within the frame-work of a state whose main occupation is fostering the liberty of the individual, there is no room for force. And, as for the will of the state, we have no hesitation

in affirming that such a will is a myth. All the will there is, is the will of the individual. When the will of the state is identified with the will of the ruler, as it is identified in the totalitarian states, then such will should, in its dealings with the individual wills, assume the submissive attitude. In the concluding paragraphs of this paper we shall indicate how these principles could be worked out in practice.

Liberty, as understood by the utilitarians, and set up as the beacon light for the liberal states of Europe in the latter half of the nineteenth century, is an empty concept lacking significant content. In the view of many thinkers, liberty spells liberalism, and as liberalism, blind to the universal reign of historic relativity, has clung desperately to the empty form of freedom, it has had a very sorry downfall. The main cause of ruin that overtook the liberal states was their inability to reorient themselves in post war Europe, which was becoming increasingly collectivistic. So deep-rooted was the faith of the liberals in their absolutistic doctrine, that they failed to see that the form of freedom was changing, under their very eyes, with the changing events in the war devastated West. Liberty should be divorced from liberalism, and be given an independent status, if we are to save the individuality of the human mind from annihilation by the inhuman atrocities of the totalitarian governments.

A very subtle, yet withal a very significant psychological reaction against the liberty of the utilitarians has taken place in contemporary Europe. In the democratic countries of pre-war Europe, the individual had achieved civil liberty to his heart's content. Yet in the midst of unlimited freedom, he was oppressed by a feeling of appalling loneliness. Every step in the direction of freedom seemed to take the citizen away from his fellowmen. Complete freedom meant the complete isolation of man from his fellow beings. The reason for this is not far to seek. The pursuit of liberty in the West was

for the sake of the constant stimulation and satisfaction of those propensities which pull the human mind down to the level of gross materialism. The elemental propensities were to have unlimited scope for free play, each in its own right, and the individual was to have perfect freedom for the exercise of his self-assertion. When liberty of this type is achieved, sympathy (which is truly hormic) ² is stifled. The individual becomes so isolated in his province of liberty, that a feeling of indescribable terror overtakes him. He seeks some desperate measure for regaining the sense of lost kinship with his fellow-men. Gregariousness asserts itself over the other propensities in the mental structure of such an individual. The man who has achieved liberty craves for something which would rekindle in his bosom the emotion for living, enjoying and dying with his fellow-men. But with sympathy completely suppressed, and with his mind definitely oriented towards this earth by his age-long training in the pursuit of material goods, the modern citizen can find satisfaction for this newly aroused emotion only in the physical environment. And in the physical environment war or preparation for war is the only channel that can drain off the super-abundant energy of this rekindled sentiment. It is tragic to contemplate that the pursuit of liberty in the West is steadily leading to the destruction of all that is highest and noblest in human nature.

Those who are far-sighted among the liberal thinkers of the present day have realised that collectivism has come to stay. They are making valiant attempts to bring about a compromise between liberalism and collectivism, and between liberty and

2. Sympathy of the hormic type is advaitic in its essence. It sustains the unity of the individual with Brahman. It is the emotion *par excellence*, which amidst the individuating tendencies of earthly existence, keeps reminding man of the true goal-of life.

economic security. But, all their attempts are confined to the material realm, and self-regard is still, as it has always been, the main spring of their activity. So long as this sentiment occupies the sovereign place in the scale of human values, so long will the *laissez faire* of liberalism be followed by the tyranny of dictatorship, so long will pointless liberty be dogged by inhuman authority, and so long will all these move round in a vicious circle leading man no-where. The only way of escape out of this impasse lies in giving direction to liberty. Liberty may be well directed and its empty form filled with rich content, if the Brahman-regarding sentiment takes the place of self-regard in the European scale of values.

II

What is the status of liberty and authority, as understood by us, in the modern world ?

There is a tendency among contemporary political philosophers to divide all the modern states into Fascistic and Communistic, with no middle ground between them. They see either *red* or *black* all over the world. Recent events in Western Europe and America seem to lend very strong support to the view that democracy and liberty are defunct. But in the midst of the totalitarian conflagration which has spread over all European states, there has been kept alive in England, France and the United States the germ of democracy which is bound to develop into a mighty organism in course of time. While we recognise the universal sway of collectivism, we hold that modern states should be divided into those that have become *Catastrophically Collectivistic*, eschewing all that is high and noble in liberalism, and those that are becoming *Gradually Collectivistic*, retaining the most valuable element in human personality.

To day all over the world self-regarding authority is rampant, while liberty is in hiding. The stentorian voice of authority which

had kept individual liberty in bondage for well nigh nineteen hundred years in Europe, and which was silenced after a hard struggle for a short while during the last century, is now beginning to be heard again. The two main reasons for the set-back in human progress, resulting from the suppression of liberty are, the inherent weakness of the liberal conception of liberty, and the disruption of the stable economic structure of the world by the war. The subtle connection between political liberty and economic stability was pressed into the fore-ground by the last world catastrophe. Previous to the war, economic practices encouraged the growth of internationalism, but the war suddenly threw up the fierce elements of narrow nationalism. Tariff barriers and other well-known devices for making each nation self-contained and absolutely independent of others were erected, but as these heavy walls were raised on slender foundations laid for delicate structures, the entire economic frame-work collapsed bringing ruin to the whole world. When the totalitarian governments came into existence, their first task was to secure economic stability. Their narrow outlook did not permit of the existence, side by side, of liberty and economic security of the individual, and as they valued the latter most, the former was ruthlessly suppressed.

Amongst the totalitarians, we have, perforce, to distinguish between Fascists and Communists, but they are at one so far as their attitude to liberty is concerned. In Germany, Italy and Russia not only is liberty considered to be not a value to be striven after, by the human mind, but it is looked upon as a veritable 'dis-value' to be shunned by the 'loyal citizen' of the state. Lenin laid it down as a dictum that 'the world cannot be made happy unless it is deprived of freedom, which is nothing but a torment and a burden to it'; while Mussolini thunders that in the Fascist state the individual is deprived of all useless and possibly harmful freedom.' Despite these vociferous declarations, the dictators maintain that

they are preserving "freedom." The individual, according to their notions, is free when he desires what the state desires, when he accepts the ends prescribed by the executive, and when he acts in conformity with the wishes of the dictator. To maintain this strange type of freedom, the dictator-ridden states make free use of force. Nazi concentration camps and Moscow trials are the means for maintaining 'freedom'. The individual who exhibits the least trace of non-conformity in thought, word or deed with the aims of the dictator is un-free, and so he should be eliminated. Liberty is dead in the collectivistic states of the present day Europe.

Freedom of speech and association, freedom of the press, and even academic freedom are unknown in the modern *red* and *black* states. Not only is the press muzzled, but it is forced to do servile propaganda work for the dictator. Every association within the state, whether voluntary or otherwise, is conscripted into the service of the state. Scientific research should aim not at objective truth, but at the establishment of state-dictated truth. In the exercise of authority for the achievement of these ends, the dictators are inhuman and unscrupulous. Insidious propaganda is freely used for poisoning the minds of the citizens. Education of the young is made so drastically and rigidly nationalistic that the coming generation will instinctively hate anything that is not in conformity with their ideas of right. To think for oneself is a sin while to act upon one's conviction is high treason in the totalitarian states.

There is a difference between the Fascistic and Communistic conceptions of the state, which is of some theoretical importance, though in practice it does not amount to much. Fascism is the outcome of the absolutistic Hegelian conception of the state, while Communism harks back to the dialectical materialism of Marx. The communist makes the individual, in theory at least, the centre of state organisation,

for he says that the material well-being of the individual should be the sole aim of the state. The Fascist, on the other hand, does not even recognise the right of the individual to exist apart from the state. 'All for the state, and nothing outside the state' is his motto. The fascistic dictator, therefore, suppresses quite openly the liberty of the individual in the interests of his totalitarian state, while the Communistic Comrade equivocates when he commits the same atrocity, claiming that he is doing it in the interests of the individual. Says Lenin, 'the world cannot be made happy... unless men are by force maintained in a condition of earthly bliss thought out by the authorities in accordance with reason.' The dictators of all types of totalitarian persuasion maintain that what is 'good' for the individual should be determined by the state. And this leads us to, what is perhaps the most important aspect of collectivistic life to-day, namely, Economic planning.

We have noted already that when dictatorships came into existence, they were faced with the problem of economic security and stability demanding solution. In a war-weary world, torn into pieces by economic rivalry, and giving birth to new nationalities with the spirit of intolerant nationalism kept at white heat by the fire of national jealousy, the dictators had to build up the economic life of the state by putting together the broken fragments of the older structure. To achieve any degree of success in this difficult enterprise, they had to adopt planning. And so they threw themselves wholeheartedly into nation-wide economic planning. But planning demands complete suppression of individual initiative and enterprise, and the rigid regimentating of the citizens. When once the goal of the plan is clearly conceived, and the means also settled by those in authority, then the individual has to be forced into the scheme without any consideration whatever for his feelings and preferences. Liberty has to be suppressed as an evil, and unquestioned authority has to reign supreme

over the minds and bodies of men. To keep the individual willingly subservient, and to secure his obedience, it is necessary to kindle some deep emotion in his mind. The dictator-ridden states achieve this by undertaking foreign expeditions or by keeping the citizens on tenter-hook by feverish preparations for some mysterious war. When a real war-emergency arises the citizens of democratic states too submit to the deprivation of civil liberty in order that a greater and more important liberty may be achieved. But such an emergency is of short duration, and with the return of the normal conditions of life liberty also returns. The collectivistic states on the other hand, seem to have been organised with a view to perpetuate the war atmosphere. Life under a dictator is controlled by a never-ending series of emergency decrees. How long this state of affairs is going to last we cannot say; but at present *liberty is completely dead in Central and Eastern Europe.*

While condemning the totalitarian states for the suppression of liberty, we do not wish to be blind to their merits. Russian Communism, in its economic sphere, has done great service to man by annihilating the acquisitive propensity, which is the inspirer of all that is brutal in human nature. Fascism has emphasised the need for living and pulling together. If Communism would carry out a programme of annihilation of all the primitive human propensities, and if Fascism would enlarge its conception of the state so as to embrace a world state, then we shall have an ideal human society in which collectivism and democracy will be reconciled with each other, and in which individual liberty will be jealously safe-guarded. But such a state is not yet to be !

The democratic states have preserved the outward form of liberty, but the recent actions of the executive in these states indicate the slow and steady narrowing down of the province of liberty. In England, Ireland and America civil

liberty is being curtailed by repressive legislation. Fascism, we are told, has spread its tentacles into the heart of Western Europe and America, and when democracy is completely swamped by totalitarianism, liberty will be a thing of the past.

There are two causes, one of which is historical and the other psychological, for the suppression of liberty in our day. The Eastern and Central European nations have never taken kindly to individual freedom. Pareto writing as early as 1893, observed that what struck one in the politico-social life of Italy was the 'entire absence of political parties and an enormous extension of the functions of the state.' 'The Germans' says Professor Roberts, 'have never wanted democracy ... They do not want individual freedom The German is designed by history and nature to provide mass material for dictatorship' With the submissive temper of the Russian mind moulded by prolonged submission to autocratic rule we are familiar. In such favourable soil does European dictatorship grow from strength to strength.

The psychological cause for the servility of European mind is very subtle. Self-regard keeps alive the individualistic propensities but suppresses the universalistic sympathy. As a protest against exaggerated individualism, gregariousness asserts itself in a sub-conscious manner. This propensity operates on the physical level, seeking satisfaction in mere physical contact of varying degrees. When such satisfaction is secured, the individual is prepared to surrender his liberty. Dictators have not been slow to take advantage of this pathetic predicament to suppress the liberty which the members of their states enjoyed before they came into power.

Are we to watch as helpless sufferers and impotent spectators the gathering shades of oppressive totalitarianism based on self-seeking authority and blatant ignorance, or do we have any solution for the problem of liberty? Our

contention is that the spiritual genius of India can offer a solution to the baffling problems of Western political life. The present political machinery will have to be rebuilt on a plan, the vague outlines of which we are sketching in the following paragraphs.

In a spiritualised democracy, the sole purpose of whose existence is the preservation of the liberty of the individual, the only person who can be entrusted with the task of governing the country is he who has renounced the pleasures of this world. *He should be a jivan-mukta*. As in Plato's Republic, there should be a panel of *jivan-muktas*, who would take turns at the task of ruling the country, each spending half the year in solitary meditation and the other half in administering the affairs of the state. These *sanyasin* rulers would make wise laws, but in enforcing the laws they would never exercise self-assertion, but only sympathy. If punishment be necessary, they would inflict such punishment on their own body, offering it as a sacrifice if necessary. They would not be afraid of criticism, nor would they plead with the public for the voluntary suppression of differences of opinion. In exercising authority inside the frame-work of the government, there is always the danger of the self-assertive propensity being rekindled even in the minds of *jivan-muktas*. The only corrective for assertion is submission. The rulers should have the submissive propensity constantly stimulated in their minds by welcoming and even demanding unsparing criticism of their policies.

Every limb of government, composed as it ought to be of individuals who have achieved a greater or lesser measure of success in renouncing the world, will be inspired by the high ideals of sympathy and service. The police, for instance, will not lathi-charge an infuriated mob, but will let themselves be charged by the mob, in order to maintain order. If they are men of the right type, the crowd will soon realise its folly.

Vicarious suffering inflicted on the bodies of government servants will be the guiding principle for the preservation of law and order, and for the administration of justice in a spiritualised democracy.

That our programme is not utopian is established by two significant events in the political life of our day. Mr. Henry Ford has suggested the placing of a line of non-combatants between the belligerents in China. In our country Mahatma Gandhi is taking steps for the formation of a 'peace Brigade'. Writing in the *Harijan* about the scheme for a non-violent army of volunteers he says, 'Such an army should be ready to cope with any emergency, and in order to still the frenzy of mobs should risk their lives in numbers sufficient for the purpose. A few hundred, may be a few thousand, such spotless deaths will once for all put an end to the riots. Surely a few hundred young men and women giving themselves deliberately to mob fury will be any day a braver method of dealing with such madness than the display and use of the police and the military'. The significant change that we have introduced in the scheme is to make those young men and women members of the police and the military.

M. Romain Rolland writes 'In a world crisis it is in India I repose my absolute faith for the emancipation of the human race.' The voice of M. Rolland is really the voice of ravaged Europe in great anguish. If our country is to carry a message of hope to agonised Europe, she must present her spiritualised political programme fully tested in actual practice. Politics must be spiritualised, and one effective way of elevating political activity to the highest level within reach of human capacity has been indicated in this paper.

Authority and Freedom in the Modern State

BY

K. R. SREENIVASA IYENGAR.

The subject of this symposium has been couched in delightfully vague terms, but the limits—both spatial and temporal—for its discussion have been fixed in a very definite, i. e., parsimonious, manner. In particular, the question may refer to the actual condition of things—of both authority and freedom—in the modern state, or it may refer to the ideal status that they should occupy in the modern state irrespective of their present position in any actual state. I take it that the latter is the problem of real philosophical significance. The former is the task of the descriptive historian though all reference to it cannot be avoided even in a purely philosophical discussion.

We can all agree, I think, that of the two concepts, authority and freedom, freedom is the more positive one, and if it were purely a question of morality (which in my view is essentially an individual or personal affair) I should at once and unhesitatingly affirm that authority, if necessary at all, is solely for the sake of safeguarding individual freedom. But political questions refuse thus to be constrained within the constringing limits of the moral boa-constrictor. I have always held that ethics is wider than morality and politics is but an aspect of (such) collective ethics. Hence I am unable to endorse the view of Mr. P. S. Naidu that the only natural sanction for authority is the liberty of the individual. Liberty

is in sooth the limiting concept, but in order to fix the limits of authority, we should enquire what liberty means in personal morality and how far and under what conditions it can be made a value in ethico-politics. Such an inquiry would of itself reveal the nature of authority and the relation in which it stands to liberty. What we want is a logical, not a psychological, analysis of the complex situation comprehended by authority—freedom, for we believe that in such matters genesis is of less significance than teleis.

And I must at the very outset confess that I have never been able to shake myself free from the influence of idealistic ethics in morals though, as will be seen shortly, I have seen reason to modify its conclusions in politics. I have no sympathy with the facile doctrine that liberty is absence of restraint, however qualified, for I do not believe that civil or political liberty—this is what is usually meant by the term—is an end in itself or that political restraints are the only shackles on personal liberty. Freedom is essentially of the spirit, of the inner man, more than of the body or of any other external factor of life. A man is truly unfree when he is a slave to the external which he cannot control, however free he may be from restraints; he is truly free when he is master over the external however much he may be hampered by restrictions. In other words, attachment to the external, in the sense of identifying oneself with it *as external*, is the great slavery of the spirit; and detachment from the external—recognising the distinctness of one's spirit from everything that is non-spirit so as to treat it as *adiaphora* if necessary—is the deliverance of the spirit. The non-spirit or the external may be a material object or environment, a darkening passion or prejudice, ignorance as much as merely intellectual knowledge, one's country or people, yes, even the institutions of society. When once the spirit detaches itself from these things, it attains bliss and unfolds its own nature.

The manifestation of spirit, when thus truly itself, is essentially in the realms of *creativity*. Spirit is most free when it is truly creative. Creation is the embodiment of ideal meanings, ends or values in objects. In play, e. g., the child is supremely free because it is creative, it is embodying ideal meanings in outward objects—building houses out of sand, making soldiers out of tin etc. Work is distinguished from play in that it adopts an object which is more adequate to embody ideal meanings than the object adopted in play. Further, in work the sense of possession, of exclusive ownership of the object created, supervenes upon the sense of creation through psychological factors it is unnecessary to detail here. Play is creativeness pure and simple, work is creativeness plus possessiveness or attachment to the created object. This sense of attachment prevents a man from freely sharing the results of his creation with others. He would exchange it only for a *quid pro quo*. This same sense of appropriation accounts for some other differences between play and work, notably the fact that work is felt to be constraining, a kind of duty or discipline undertaken for hope of reward or fear of punishment.

It is not, however, in the nature of work *qua* an earnest activity of embodying meanings, that it should be felt to be burdensome or constraining. If life cannot be made into play entirely, it is possible at least to adopt a playful attitude in life, to bring to bear an artistic frame of mind on it. And the elements of this attitude are disinterestedness, non-possessiveness or non-attachment, spontaneity, freedom, flexibility, adaptiveness, sympathetic imaginativeness, joy in giving and sharing. None of these qualities is incompatible with a creativeness inspired by earnestness of purpose characteristic of real life

True freedom, then, lies in this spirit of detachment expressing itself in creativeness. Though the motive of

quid pro quo cannot, on the economic and political level on which we are now considering this question, entirely be absent from this spirit, it can yet be free from grab and greed. The absence of restraints is not of the essence of the matter. Rules are restraints and neither play nor art is entirely free from them. In the absence of restraint, freedom would not be felt or appreciated as freedom. True freedom is the ability to expand even while obeying a law—whether imposed by self or others is immaterial—which we know does not frustrate but is in the best interests of our own self-development. The external material out of which the artist creates beauty itself imposes limitations of various sorts on him, not to speak of the manifold rules of the art he is practising. And yet these very limitations are his opportunities.

So also in real life. To take life as an art, however, implies, if the above analysis is correct, two things. Firstly, the external, the objective, the non-spirit, is inalienable from an artistic way of life. Disinterestedness is not a negative idea though there is a negative moment involved in it. The spirit distinguishes itself indeed as intelligence, activity or creativity from the objective world. But in order to give full play to its capacities and thereby achieve concrete freedom, spirit needs to enter into conscious relationships with the objects of that world, otherwise it would suffer emaciation of its being. This is a fresh kind of relatedness to objects, an attachment which, being in the nature of playing with those objects, as it were, rather than possessing them, does not bind. A co-operative whole is formed, so to say, of the spirit and the non-spirit in which the former breathes its life into the latter and then transforms it and in which therefore possessiveness has given place to creativeness. Secondly, if such an inseparable and yet non-binding relationship is to be possible for the majority of ordinary men, the objects to which they would relate themselves as subjects must be capable of

bearing the spiritual meaning which would be bodied forth in them. you can't even in play take a round stone for a flat table. Likewise, if the sordid give and take of ordinary life is to be replaced by the joy and magnanimity of spiritual giving and sharing, the atmosphere in which people live must not be choking or asphyxiating. In mere concrete terms, the economic and political institutions through which people realise their freedom must be such as, while discouraging the sense of possessiveness, will on the one hand still allow of some kind of collective ownership in economic goods, and will on the other liberate their spiritual energies and call forth their initiative and enterprise in matters mainly political.

It is the belief of the present writer, that political democracy and, more importantly, economic equality are the two great conditions of social freedom. These two things are nowhere to be found in union in the states of the world to day. We can classify modern states into (1) capitalistic democracies (Great Britain France, America etc.) (2) capitalistic autocracies (totalitarian Germany, Italy, Japan etc.) and (3) socialistic autocracies (communist Russia). Where economic inequalities exist, as in most countries of the world today, freedom is a lie, be the form of government democratic or autocratic. And in the one country where we might have expected the realisation of freedom owing to the absence in a large measure of economic inequalities, the absence of democracy, another essential condition of freedom, has effectively prevented its realisation. Totalitarian states are said to be a sign of the failure of democracies. The precise significance of this failure is not, however, often understood. It simply means that failure is inherent in the very nature of a democracy which allies itself with a profiteering capitalism which hitherto has largely worked blindly. Conscious rationalist planning is the only remedy for this disease. This being so, the collapse of democracy and the rise of dictatorships

simply means that clear-sighted capitalists have perceived that unless they take the leadership in planning and establish a government of the people by the politicians for the profiteer, that process will take a socialist or communist shape. This explains why even England—the birth place of democracy—is also going off the democratic standard, so to say, and turning fascist. But of course a profit-rooted capitalism, whether ostensibly democratic or openly autocratic, contains within itself the seeds of its own destruction—a thesis which I have no space here to prove. However, so long as the profit motive is predominant and private ownership in land and economic goods is recognised, economic inequalities are bound to remain and multiply themselves. Property is indeed an ethical idea, but, most assuredly, not individually owned property. This leads to anything but an ethical idealism. They think differently who live differently. While the rich and the propertied feel themselves free and have the opportunities and the means of cultivating the arts and the graces of life, the poor and the propertyless proletariat develop a slave-mentality, an attitude of hostility to the upper ten and the middle hundred and a general apathy to the finer and nobler strains of life—all inimical to the growth of moral freedom. Hence, if we are to realise the one great condition of freedom, economic equality—not of course in the absolute sense, but in the sense of equality of opportunity and consideration—individual ownership in land, buildings and the major tools and instruments of production should be abolished. We should favour a society of guilds or autonomous working groups for each industry and technical and cultural service consisting of all who work within the industry or service. It is unnecessary to enter here into the details of a modified form of guild-socialism which I advocate, but the two main features of such a socialism which I would emphasise for our present purpose are firstly, that land, buildings, plants and other principal

resources of production and distribution would be owned by the state but rented out to the guilds (with no right of disposal, of course) which would hold them simply as trustees of the state, and, secondly, that the guild organisation, ending with the National Guild Congress, while constituting, so far as purely economic matters are concerned, and adequate provision being made for safeguarding the consumers' interests, an imperium in itself based upon efficiency and qualification, would nevertheless be subject to the control of the political state in the final settlement of all conflicts that may arise and in matters of general economic policy such as importation of foreign labour, negotiations with other countries regarding conditions of trade etc. To find work for all is obligatory upon the Guild Congress and wages would be proportionate both to work and need, the idea being to cut off great inequalities rather than to establish absolute equality. Such an organisation would lead to a fellowship in service, a detachment from grab and greed, an attachment to the common good, a creativeness in artistic workmanship, a spiritual joy in giving and sharing, which constitute true elements of freedom. Workers would cease to be robots and regain their human personality.

And now for the other essential condition of freedom is society, political democracy. The economic state is on the whole to be subordinated to the political state which is an association of men, not as producers or consumers, but as citizens in general. So long as we are dealing with the organisation and governance of the life of men in masses we cannot dispense with some form of state, yes, even the coercive state. A society of saints needs no government, coercive or other, and the problem of freedom does not arise at all; where the rulers alone are saints and the subjects ordinary men of flesh and blood, the rulers alone are free—even so, vicarious suffering by rulers for crimes committed by subjects

may be lucid in the land of the Fourth Dimension but is unspeakably absurd here and now. But utopias apart, where in the region of political politics we are faced with the problem of governing masses of average men, physical coercion is indispensable and some ultimate authority for settling disputes and enforcing decisions, for maintaining peace within and preventing aggression from without, is a bare necessity. And so here arises at once in all its intensity and acuteness the problem of the relation of authority to the individual and his freedom.

It would be convenient to take our starting-point from the idealistic theory of the state. The fundamental mistake which that theory commits is two fold. Firstly, it identifies the government with the state. In insisting that the state embodies my "real will" to which my actual will must be made to conform, it is in effect idealising the existing government and identifying it with the state since in sober fact we do not ever meet with the state as such. And the problem of freedom does not arise at all since constraint is merely making known to me my "real" will. But granting that the (ideal) state embodies the common good, why assume that the actual state, the existing government or institution, does always body it forth in its measures and policies? And in what sense is the good a common good according to the idealist? Some things may be truly common to all such as hospitals and educational institutions, but what is there common to the R. P. A. and the Theosophical Society, about differing religious, economic and political beliefs? If nevertheless we may say that there is a common good being sought in all this in spite of such fundamental difference of outlook, surely that sense of commonness is not the one usually understood in the idealistic conceptions of the general will and the common good? In the one we are creating a common good in and through our mutually differing interests; in the other the common good

is *given* to us as an over-individual value at which all must aim.

Secondly, the idealist theory in politics is blissfully innocent of all the thousand and one ramifications and complications in political issues brought about by the influence of economic factors which plays such a large part in contemporary politics. The idealist theory was conceived at a time when capitalism had attained its zenith of success and glory and we can hardly expect such a theory not to play into the hands of capitalism—in truth, the logic of absolutism is incompatible with a true democracy or socialism. But the rise and progress of socialism in contemporary politics has brought about an entire change of the political outlook in the light of which we must pronounce the idealist theory to be a theory not indeed of the first but only of the second look.

But criticism of the idealistic theory does not mean acceptance of political realism in toto. We may maintain with Laski and Hobhouse that the claims of the individual conscience are supreme, that ours is not a universe but a multi-universe embodying an ultimate and irreducible variety of experiences sometimes similar no doubt, but never identical or the same, and that the ultimate isolation and uniqueness of individual personality is the basis of politics. But on every one of these points I find myself making reservations. Can the supremacy of individual conscience give us in all cases a clear rule of resistance to the acts of the government? Is it the conscience of the majority or of the minority that is to prevail? Even if the conscience of a single individual remains unsatisfied, is not the exercise of authority upon him so far coercion pure and simple? Ought we not in any case inquire into the question whether, apart from individual conscience or consent, there may not be at least relatively objective standards of right and wrong, good and bad, unper-

ceived by individuals, and if so may not the government be embodying them in its measures as in the Harijan temple-entry measure of Travancore? This view of course rejects the purely "hindering" conception of the state and assigns to the state a more positive role in promoting the moral interests of the subjects. And is the individual really given as a full fledged personality with all his uniqueness and differences to form the basis of politics? Is it not true that while the individual and the society may each possess an underived nature or character, the value of each is realised and enhanced only in their inalienable relationship? Shortly, is not the individual as much as the society being continually made?

In any constructive theory ¹ of civil society and the state, we must recognise the operation of two or three factors whose nature I have no space here to discuss but can only assume, viz., the individual with his unique differences; the social mind which is the system of the ideas, the wills, the feelings and the valuations of men who live together to achieve common purposes, or the organisation and synthesis, under one or two governing cultural patterns or configurations, of these wills and valuations forming the "genius" or the "soul" of a people; and a system of government or constitution with laws to protect the social substance, upheld by representative leaders of society who embody in themselves the inmost spirit of the social mind. This social mind or substance is the product of a conscious commonness (as distinguished from the common consciousness of the absolutist theories) which under one aspect as a cultural configuration or a value-synthesis under a particular dominating

1. The theory is worked out more elaborately in the chapters on Economic, Personal and Social Value in my forthcoming work "The Metaphysics of Value".

idea, remains unalterable and sways the whole life of a people, and under another aspect as consisting of living tissues which are constantly undergoing change and modification and development connecting the individuals withal, depends upon individual minds and is constantly achieved and enriched by them. The concrete living individual who certainly has his own unique nature is yet the growing product, as much as the society or the state, of the interplay of this nature and the social mind in both of its aspects. That is, the individual and the society are continually being fashioned and refashioned in this relationship.

It follows that we cannot talk of authority and freedom as if they were fixed entities confronting each other and trying to swallow up each the other. They both express the two facets of the social mind, the aspect of the continuity and integration of social substance represented by authority—and here the individual as citizen is subordinated to the state, and the aspect of expansion and development of its tissues represented by the individual and his freedom—and here the state is a means of enhancing the moral growth of the individuals. No act of the individual is free which injures the vitality of the social substance, and no act of the state is authorised which tends to diminish the moral stature of the individuals. For this stature in its turn determines the development of the social substance and so the sanction for authority is not individual freedom as such but this freedom as consistent with the vitality and development of social substance. The work of conserving social substance is not incompatible with the initiation of measures to enrich it. Hence the actual government must be in the hands of an intellectual aristocracy strong enough to maintain the pattern of culture, wise enough to body forth visions of vitalisation, willing enough to respond to liberal and spiritual influences from below. It must rest upon an essentially democratic foundation

of election and representation, for power always corrupts and absolute power absolutely corrupts; and while the government is free to initiate new measures and policies as it deems fit, they must ordinarily speaking obtain the approval of the people's representatives in the Houses of Legislature, and delegated legislation must not be allowed to develop into a "New Despotism". But I donot want to make a fetish of democracy where it is not founded on economic equality, for in such a case political democracy would by itself be only a device for consolidating the power of the *haves* against the *have-nots*. Political democracy is by itself no guarantee of freedom, individual or collective. Democracy is more a form or way of life. Freedom is indeed a thing of the spirit, but in politics the qualities of disinterestedness and creativity can be develop'd only under certain conditions, such as equality in economic competency, universal education, adult suffrage and the capacity for the selection of wise leaders. Hence the establishment of a whole-hearted socialistic democracy in every state willing to undertake economic planning to be carried out by the guilds, not in the interests of the nation only, but as guided by an International League for Planning, can alone, by killing the profit motive in the human breast, prevent the rise and development of totalitarian states (with their incidence of wars etc.) which are nothing but organisations of big business using political and technical experts to plan industry, commerce and finance so as to maintain the power of the propertied classes and procure the acquiescence of the working classes by conces-ions of wages and other conditions of labour. Thus alone will social freedom be realised and reconciled with authority. Such freedom is the value emerging from the inseparable union of the individual mind and the social mind—a union in which the individual spirit pursues its creative capacities under conditions determined by social substance. This is possible only in an internationally organised social

democracy in every state—under any other condition the profit motive is sure to raise its ugly head and liberty and equality would simply be charmed away. In such a state alone would liberty be consistent with equality and both reconciled with the authority and the sovereignty of the state : liberty for the individual, authority for the society (the social mind) and power for the government (the few). The sanction for authority here would be the integration and the enrichment of social substance which under the aspect of growth necessarily depends upon individual freedom. The right of individual conscience is indeed indefeasible, but on any given question neither the conscientious objection of a minority nor the unconscious acquiescence of a majority can as such be said to have the right with it ; we must believe in the possibility of relatively objective standards whose ultimate utility in respect of social substance is the sole test of their validity in society. There is such a thing as long-time value in society as in the case of prohibition and compulsory teaching of Hindi in the Madras Province ; and so though we agree with Laskei that “eternal vigilance is the price of liberty”, we can subscribe to his view that “actual government is an essay in the conditional mood” only on the stipulation that immediate discontent, partisan opposition and merely sectional disaffection will not be recognised as sufficient conditions for invalidating the essay.

Freedom and Authority in the Modern State :

*(The problem of dialectical synthesis in the history of
scientific civilisation ; submitted to the Indian
Philosophical Congress : 14th Session, Alla'habad, 1938.)*

By

M. V. V. K. RANGACHARI.

ABSTRACT :

The application of science in war is not countered by emotional puritanism. The machine needs greater control for constructive use. The absolutist interpretations of modern history tend to force humanity into regimentation. International realism is the philosophy of modern life. There is need for higher direction at each stage. Indian Philosophy should come to grips with political problems and not remain theoretical, other-worldly. Brahman-regard as the sanction for authority is too abstract to drive collective endeavour. It is no objective Absolute. The psychological foundation of Atman imposes inflexibility. Neither the replacement of the scale of values nor monistic self-assertion removes the possessing propensity. Liberty did not, through over-emphasis, further dictatorships. The states that developed into unitary governments never knew real liberty.

Spiritual dictatorship is no antidote to the secular one. Both claim infallibility and withhold liberty. In the sense of selflessness Hitler and Mussolini are Jivan Muktas. But they thrive on war. The emotional idealism that praised the Kshatra Dharma (Gita) animates them. War emphasises discipline. It calls forth sacrifice. Political idealism is none

too different from religious absolutism. Under enlightened anarchy, the state liquidates itself. That is political entropy. The ideal monist unifies liberty and authority by abstracting away from the conflicts of life. To allow those who govern to suffer for the failures of those who are governed is perverted social ethics. Further to define the state as other than the repressive force that it is, and the men in authority as different from those who wield power and assertion is faulty analysis.

Utilitarian liberty may require slight revision in terms of the collective life. Democratic institutions may adapt themselves to modern conditions. Life that expresses itself through biological differences refuses to be betrayed into monistic patterns. The qualified-monist who recognises individuality (Jiva) and thus logically sees in evolution the path of real progress is none-the-less tethered to teleology. He has place for the collective social experiment and playfully engages in the world-activity (Lila). The sporting artistic attitude to life removes much of the care of possession and profit. But the prime mover is the social substance and authority is put on the ground of the genius or soul of the society. When physical environment, even social institutions may bind the spirit as external, the dynamic of social substance cannot be less binding. In unfolding its own nature, the Jiva should express social substance. Else it is unfree. No impact of the social mind on the individual is authority. This does not resolve the real antithesis. Lurking behind modern dress, there is the assumption of conformity with an other-worldly ideal.

Purpose and evolution contradict each other. Evolution is multilateral while purpose is one-sided. Vedanta even of the Parinama school drags down spontaneity into singular evaluation drawn from virtual absolutism. In arrogating, to promote the moral interests of the subjects, power to

itself, the state, and in its name the ruling class, tend to drive life to regimentation. Authority cannot be liquidated by equating freedom with the vitality of the social substance. Even the playful attitude to life will acquire the flavour of duty and discipline. To the extent to which the individual play has been well or ill-conducted, to that extent will ideas of reward and punishment enter into bargain. Social evaluations will find fresh scales. The ethics of value is ultimately utilitarian.

Realism does not do away with leadership. But the range of leadership will be confined to the affairs of the present life. Nor does the philosophical theory that reality is material imply lack of ideals in individual and collective conduct. Nation-states are not the final phases of integration of human life, nor is war the only way of resolving antagonisms. Non-violence on the mass-scale is not beyond human effort. The antithesis between liberty and authority may be liquidated in the international, as on the continental scale, by reference to the human capacity for goodwill and reason, and the slow evolving path of *Ahimsa*. It is a secular solution, nothing more.

Freedom and Authority in the Modern State :

BY

M. V. V. K. RANGACHARI.

In projecting the triadic patterns of Indian Thought into world-history, there is the danger of abstracting away from modern conditions. The lure of Idealism declaring civilisation as an evil tends to be unhistorical. Machinery has come to stay. Modern life cannot escape its influence. The application of science in war and aggression is not countered by emotion or puritanism. Unless the clock goes back, or through some catastrophic movement leaps into the unpercieved future, history to-day cannot ignore industry. To seek to eliminate mass-production as inimical to ordered life is to own defeat instead of facing the problem. Nor is there any warrant for assuming that the machine is evil, absolutely. In relation to certain existing conditions, it may have proved itself injurious. It only indicates the need for the greater application of talent to control it.

The Adwaitic and Visishtadwaitic interpretations of modern history suffer in this regard from their traditional allegiance to absolutism. Despite extensive world-contacts, the intensive claims of fixed standards, unalterable ideals, reveal an innate tendency to force humanity into the framework of monism, absolute or qualified. Realism has at least the merit of recognising diversity, dealing squarely by human differences. (Bahusyam prajayeyeti) Pluralism is not mere description of existing variations. Its pantheism may be atheistic. Its logic may not reach the Absolute. But it is not devoid entirely of

higher direction. Unless it too degenerates into mere Dualistic Idealism as under the Hindu Vedantic influence, or like Islam begins to develop new barriers of social fanaticism, international realism would appear to remain an accommodating philosophy in modern life. Pluralism is the residuary article in human faith. It should include all forms of thought, comprehending Positivism, while not setting its face against Nihilism. Yet, at every stage, from each point, there is need for the higher direction, if life were not to stagnate or perish through inanity.

It is a timely warning for Indian philosophy that has till now remained in the theoretical level, that it is called upon to come to grips with the political problems of the Modern State. The higher direction should move from this world and not away from it. It should come out of this life and not from any other. So long as Idealism draws its inspiration from extra-terrestrial currents, so long will it remain mere theory. Its doctrinal differences of Monism, absolute and qualified, and Dualism do not touch human practice in any extended surface. The acid comment against civilisation is not without point. Men may fly in the air like birds, may swim in the sea like fishes. But how to walk upon the earth they may not yet know. Neither does it imply that walking is a static performance. It is progressive movement. It does not do to stand on the head thrusting the limbs into air (Shirsasana) if we are to cover any valid ground. The way is not to force philosophy into the uncongenial soils of the modern state, but to evolve the path of corporate motion amid conflicting tendencies. For philosophy, in its social aspect, involves not merely *walking*, but *walking together*. The stand-on-the-head philosophy is of little import in the present context. Whatever its individualist merit, its application in social practice cannot attain universal recognition.

While speaking of 'ultimate values' the idealist betrays the crass absolutism of unhistorical doctrine. Political thought in the west may be open to criticism of applying dead men's theories to living conditions. If anything, the same criticism hits with greater force when Indian philosophy seeks to place Brahman-regard before self-regard as an antidote for grab and greed, against possessive instinct and profit-motive. For one thing, the self is never a fixed quantity, and it has been taught to expand into Brahman-hood. For another, the concept of Brahman is beyond human apprehension. Even in its absoluteness, it depends on subjective variation. We ignore the subjective contribution, and are tricked into accepting Brahman as an objective Absolute. If we recognise the subject at all, we tend to elevate him or her into Brahmanhood Itself, by a process of psychological sublimation, casting away "difference."

This psychological method, whatever its merit in personal discipline, cannot apply to social stratification. For, collective movement is distinct from individual psychology, at its lowest, average, or topmost scale of equipment or attainment. In digging into the psychological foundations of liberty and authority, there is the danger of imposing the inflexibility of absolutist thought on the varying conditions of social evolution. The will to seek out uniformity overruns the discretion of respecting diversity. Each one of us has the propensity to be self-assertive, beside also entertaining the impulse to sympathy and service. One or other of these tendencies may prevail at any given moment. Our movements are determined precisely by the factors operating on them. While the same individual may be peaceful, austere, and enlightened (Brahma) firm, over-powering, and generous (Kshatra) productive and conservative (Vysya) and inclined to service (Paricharya), the impact of environmental forces may rouse one or other of these moods into play on varying occasions. There is no regimentation of life into ruling classes or castes as there is no individual foot-

rule for standardised movement without reference to social determination. If, as Shaw holds, men want to be ruled, it is no less true that they also want to rule. He who leaves off one wing, faces away from life, deals in abstract terms. Self-asserting authority may triumph through the excitation of self-regard through fear or inducement. Liberty may be surrendered in the name of economic security, which is another name for material self-regard. Even social service, personating altruism may be disguised self-regard. But the replacement of the human scale of values by a scale drawn from another world altogether, would leave history alone. For eliminating profit-motive and possessive individualism, need man retire from the earth? To mend economics is not to end them. The solution must be found within economics alone.

There is yet another flaw in the psychological analysis offered. How attainment of liberty stifled hormic sympathy is an intriguing problem. Individual liberty may have led to isolation. The terror of isolation may have led to gregariousness. (P. S. Naidu). But to argue that the achievement of the good things of physical life through liberty culminated in the desire to die with fellow-men is not normal reading of psychology. The rekindled emotion towards gregarious life does not naturally lead to the channel draining off into collective death, which war imports. The history of Eastern and Central European states which have never gone far in liberal tradition explains the rise of dictatorships in Italy, Germany and Russia. At any rate, it is not the over-equipment of liberty that helped the martial gregariousness under totalitarian authority, but ill-furnished material and mental surroundings. Again it is not exaggerated individualism that reacted in these cases into surrender of liberty. The submissive temper had been the fortunate asset handed over from past generations to modern authority to exploit.

But spiritual dictatorship is not the antidote to the secular one. Both withhold liberty. There is not freedom even to confess. Holding fast to our faith in the capacity for progress, we should be free to confess our disbelief in human infallibility. Life is an experiment. It involves success as it implies failure. He who pretends to rise above the dualisms of existence is a social abnormality. He may have renounced some pleasures while harbouring affinity to subtler emotions. A jivan-mukta or panel of Jivan-muktas would be hard standard to set up. If it is merely the elimination of selfishness and baser instincts that is meant, then Mussolini, Hitler or any other modern dictator may be classed among the Jivan Muktas, since the simplicity, earnestness, and concern for the welfare of the masses as well as the exemplary private lives of the leaders entitle them to a place among the supreme brotherhood of Jivan-muktas. That is how they are valued by those who through intimate association are competent to pronounce an opinion. We who are removed farther from their mental get-up dare not in the name of our spirituality assign to them a lower rank.

We condemn dictatorship because of its war mind. It holds that war puts the stamp of nobility upon the people. It believes neither in the possibility nor the utility of perpetual peace. It is the outbreak of emotional idealism comparable to the exhortation : Gita II, 31, 32. There may be overstatements like : war being the prooning hook, or its being to man what maternity is to woman, but the significance of prohibition against war is not absolute, but only of relative validity. We can understand the Nazi persecution of the Jews on the ideal ground of "Aryanism". As Gen. Goering has it : it is impossible to deprive a people from within of all its national virtues and allow it to be demoralised and cowardly and at the same time to act in a heroic way towards foreign countries. The Nordic Race cult and also the deified state of Fascism are idealist exaltations. "Fascism conceives of the State as abso-

lute, in comparison with which all individuals or groups are relative, only to be conceived in relation to the state."

War emphasises discipline. It offers ideals to sacrifice for. Dictators cannot be accused of self-interest or, their following, of self-regard. In dialectical sequence, the best guarantee of peace is the most aggressive war-minded person. "The Leader in Germany is the first guarantor of European peace...He took up a war to the death against communism and therewith raised a bulwark for the other European nations." (*Germany Reborn*, p. 158). These leaders realise in their persons the heroic sympathy (the Adwaitic emotion) which sustained the identity of the individual with the nation. That it delimited itself to the nation, and did not overflow its geographical bounds is historical accident, against which no form of absolutism yet propounded is proof. Social life has marched through religious mysticism or fanaticism, from mediaeval barbarism, into political absolutism. The field has changed, but the course is consistent throughout. The link between emotion and absolutism is unbreakable. Political subjection is another form of willing submission which worshipped at the altars of Saints and unmoving deities. When we talk of ultimate values we pretend to use the language of human economy, while we import the contents from dumb mummies buried centuries behind our time. The sceptre of authority spiritual or secular carried with it, not the cradle in which humanity would thrive, but the coffin with suggestions of an after-world.

Nor is the antithesis resolved by placing sanyasins in power. Plato's ideal republic is yet to be founded, perhaps in an ideal world. Even then punishment is only transferred from the perpetrator of crime to the prosecutor or possibly the judge also thereof. Where through exalted sentiment, crime disappears, the state also may lose itself without any loss to the community. An enlightened anarchy where every body is a saint is the idealist dream. The State withers away, and where

there is no authority, the problem of freedom does not call for solution. That would be the condition of political entropy when human organisation would stop further movement as when astronomical bodies remain stationary due to thermal balance. While the human organism lasts, the need for adjustment between opposing forces, good and evil, crime and its cure should remain. We cannot imagine the postulate of all-perfect order, and resolve the problem of imperfect organisation. We may believe in relatively better conditions, but cannot venture upon the best as the final state. By inducing those in power to undergo vicarious suffering for the wrongs committed by the subjects we may purify authority, and may humanise the criminal in some degree. But our judgment drawn up from novel premises is likely to miscarry, when the state settles down into normal activity on the basis of the revised code. Where the sight of the punished criminal has already ceased to evoke extraordinary pity or tenderness in our day, it would not be too bold to anticipate that the suffering of the state-officer would go equally unheeded. Men get used to it. They begin to associate it with duties of state. It may deter men from seeking service but the best will have to suffer most. Even idealism which presents perverted notions of Dharma (right) cannot escape the charge of darkness (tan.asavrita, Gita, XVIII, 32) if it did not protect the good, and destroy the evil-doer (Gita. IV, 8). The ideal monist is drawn into yet another snare. In the spiritualised democracy, authority does not draw inspiration from assertion, but the bond of unity should be sympathy and self-sacrifice. The state-officer may extend sympathy, and sacrifice himself in lieu of the offender. But in the context is it proper to name it the exercise of authority? Far from being a correct psycho-philosophical analysis of authority, it is open to the same charge of ill-conceived definition of the true goal of life to which that authority should be supposed

to lead. The state is nothing if it is not the special repressive force in social life, and authority in its name is unmeaning if it did not imply assertion. Liberty as the antithesis trenches upon, and is made subservient to political authority in greater or less degree.

The attack against utilitarian liberty is not formidable. The liberal democracies of the last century were the products of the industrial revolution of Capitalist Europe. Post-war organisation has been increasingly collectivistic, and democratic institutions have yet to adapt themselves to the changed conditions. The comment often made that parliaments are mere talking houses where efficient business or discipline cannot be found has its own reservation. In crises, even democracies can rise to unitary action. But whether they do rise or not on any stated question, the proper way to mend them is not to impose an other-worldly ideal from without with reference to which they ought to direct their activities, but to focus attention on their main purpose for which they are founded, viz : to safeguard the earthly interests of the general body of the subjects. That is not an empty concept, nor is liberty enriched by significant content only when directed towards the achievement of the Brahman-regarding sentiment. Would it not be safer that Brahman should be kept free from political entanglements, even as America has so far kept herself aloof from European complications ?

If history is to be trusted, there is no more subtle corrupter of human character than the possession of irresponsible power. Men whose position raises them above human station, fall in character below it. "To give men the power of gods is in fact to afford a reasonable presumption that they will behave like beasts." (*Liberty Today*, p. 137). The holder of power may not be evilly disposed. He may be filled with the best intentions. He may be a moral reformer or religious enthusiast intent on saving souls in the next world. "He may believe in

what is essentially harmless—in temperance or vegetarianism, or the virtues of wholemeal bread. Yet his possession of power will transform his personally harmless belief into a public *menace*. He will misjudge men's desires, misunderstand their purposes, flout their wishes." (ibid, p. 138). In the absence of popular control, will the panel of Jivan Mukta's lead differently? If history is to be trusted, the present is not disconnected with the past. Emotion suppressed thought. Idealism flared into emotion. Rigid absolutism backed the ideal. The absolute is the ultimate value. The ultimate value is the sanction for authority. Authority is infallible. Infallibility should be conformed to. Conformity is the negation of liberty. The full stop to liberty is the final word. And this, even after the recognition is made that 'all the will there is, is the will of the individual, the will of the state is a myth' betrays the tragedy of confusion involved in the application of the principles of oriental Vedanta to the ordering of social life in the existing political and economic complications. The non-violent national militia or peace-brigade has reference to human contacts in communal clashes or land-wars. These as also the placing of non-combatants between the belligerents in China (Henry Ford's suggestion) may be of little use, since the horizontal defence cannot protect from plans to attack vertically. (Cf, *Germany Reborn*, p. 142 . The over emphasis on "psychological foundations" is the logical corollary of a system of thought that negates reality in everything but mind. The rigid icy-cold Advaitism synthesises the contradictions obvious to experience by eliminating as illusion (Vivarta) the solid physical content of the universe. To the absolutist, history is of little account. To him the modern state is as non-existent with all its galling authority, as is the individual himself with claims to social liberty. He is somehow identical with Brahman, and Brahman is nothing if not the self. It is the tragedy of psychic expe-

rience that the sublimation of humanity into divinity should ignore the claims of the former to the minimum requirements of physical well-being. The animal as the unit should first receive recognition, before the claim to jivan-mukti is sustained. The modern state is of this world, with its history, and not out of it, pertaining to another. Life cannot be regimented even on the *basis* of unqualified Atman, so long as it continues to express itself through biological differences. The antithesis implicit in freedom and power cannot be resolved by the abstract method of Adwaitic identification.

II

The subtler form of idealism which, while affecting to preserve the integrity of the individual (jiva) invests the finite form, unitary or communal, with a super-finite potentiality, kindred in spirit, yet not identical with Brahman (the Absolute) touches the ground-level of life more intimately. Psychology apart, the Visishtadwaitic concern for historical logic is a point gained in social dialectics. While the Adwaitin would adapt the utilitarian formula of liberty and would invest the state with authority only for preserving the individual as Brahman-regarding, the qualified-monist would allow freedom on terms of the teleological evolution of the social substance. To the absolute monist, the jiva is nothing if not merged in Brahman. Qualified monism has place for evolution (parinama) and the individual progress in the direction of emancipation (moksha) may be, even is, a collective social experiment. The Absolute retains its absolutism, but is sportfully (lila) related to the physical reality of the world which constitutes its fragment (ekamsena sthito jagat, Gita, X, 42). But what is gained in the recognition of the individual is lost in the teleosis. We can readily concede that politics is collective ethics but we must demur to the claims of another world against this.

For that is implicit in the detachment of the spirit from the external, the so-called non-spirit. A material object, physical environment, mental experiences, the people, country, even the institution of society may bind the spirit as external. Only through detachment from these is bliss attained, and the jiva "unfolds its own nature". It should be a peculiar property of the individual to be able to defy the non-spirit in all its ubiquitous ramifications. Flying from these yet retaining life intact on the planet is the problem of spiritual teleology. Lurking behind all modern dress, there is the assumption of an unearthly ideal towards which creativity converges or ought to tend.

Because the world is non-spirit, the attitude to maintain towards it is sport. Sport is life, a part, a vital part thereof. It is permissible to postulate Divine Sport to explain human shortcoming. Good and evil may well be the playballs of the Unseen Hand. But it is possible to carry the play to fatal extreme. While play has all the advantage of non-possessiveness, even on the ground of creativity it lacks the inspiration of serious enterprise. The dichotomy of social justice and individual want is not resolved by the projection of creative play into the fields of political and economic practice. The maladjustment between mass-production and feeble purchasing power, the antithesis between plentiful resources running to waste while millions hunger is not playing the game. To prevent emaciation, not only should the spirit enter into relationships with the world, but should sustain those contacts in it which further its stay therein and help build healthy society.

Social substance descended from Hegel. The state is the actualisation of freedom. It is a self-conscious ethical substance. It carries back the individual whose tendency it is to become a centre of his own, into the life of the universal substance. From this, to Mussolini's claim that the individual

is not annulled but rather multiplied, is a logical step. That is the idealist conception of the state, no doubt. But despite criticism of the identification of the individual with the state is not even the teleological evolutionist, with all the display of interaction between the two, unconsciously led into the same goal of regimenting manhood in the military clothes of sporting spiritualism? If the progress of the state-substance is to be measured at all, is it not done in terms of the spiritual livery that is supplied to its units? Teleosis ignores that purpose and evolution are inherent contradictions. Though Paley's watch was stolen away from the earth, it recurs in the ethico-political formulations based on Parinama Vedanta. The assumption that ultimate objective values can be consciously predetermined is the drag on the multilateral impulses apparent in evolution.

The positive role of the state in promoting the moral interests of the subjects arrogates to it an invalid super-personality over the individual. In the organic body ill-treatment to a part incommodes the whole. In the body politic, there may be non representation of even important parts. The state has no claim to authority or allegiance any more than a voluntary association, except that the accident of birth in geography makes a member an involuntary subject. When we are free to impress our thoughts and feelings on the policies of the state, then alone is the state evolutionary; when it merely expresses the will of irresponsible tyrants, secular or spiritual, it remains absolute. The issue is not so much whether that state is dynamic or stationary, as the direction in which it moves, for life never did, if ever it could, stand still.

Although the idea of an expanding, evolving social substance is a march upon the static absolutism of the political idealist, as a value-synthesis under a particular dominating idea, if it were to remain unalterable and sway the whole cultural configuration of a people, the chances of its being

refashioned by contacts from below should be few and far between. The representative leaders will only spring from those ranks which embody in themselves the inmost spirit of the existing social mind. The state will convert itself into a hierarchy of Mathadhipatis, who will claim allegiance so long as they stand for the ideology of the Guru-parampara, and when they cease to so represent, their non-conformity cannot affect the real genius or soul of the people. Perhaps ouster of Buddhism from India is an apt illustration. You may feel the weight of truth, but it will only begin to oppress. You dare not openly adopt the new dispensation, but should prevaricate by revaluations re-interpretations, commentary and subtle argument. You should deceive the social mind into accepting the discovery by instructing it assiduously until the novelty wears away.

The real question of authority cannot be liquidated by equating freedom with the vitality of the social substance. If society is released from the objective of individual well-being, and the citizen is subordinated to the state, even playful attitude to life will have acquired the flavour of duty, and discipline. To the extent to which the individual play has been well or ill-conducted, to that extent the idea of reward or punishment will enter into the bargain. The subtlety of social evaluations will find fresh scales to measure with. The ethics of value is ultimately utilitarian.

The analogy of art-production expanding while obeying the law can be applied to social practice with reservation. Art obeys the law. But the law which art obeys is the condition of its being, which while implicit in the act of production does not protrude into consciousness so long as the creative hand is at work. The moment the artist becomes conscious of his law, he turns critic of his own art. Artistic law is not normative. Like natural laws inducted from the plurality of concrete instances, art critics also theorise in their own

special province. These theories nor the limitations of the material out of which the art creates do not impress their authority on the artist's mind nor profess to curtail his liberty. Political authority cannot afford to relegate itself to the background, as the rules of art may remain concealed. We live on the assumption that natural laws like gravity will maintain our position steadily on the planet, as they have done before, but such tacit assumption avails nothing in political life, except under ideal conditions when the state shall have withered away in the all-saints-society.

III

It is generally true that dictatorships thrive on war-mentality. But there is no necessary connection between dictatorship and war, any more than there is between democracy and peace. Bolshevik Russia is profoundly pacific, and bellicose democracies are not unknown. (Dr. G. P. Gooch, *Dictatorship in Theory and Practice*, p. 40). The internal framework of constitution may have an important bearing upon external relations. But in the complexities of political contacts that act and re-act upon one another well-founded ideological bases tend to undergo severe modification. The march from Lenin and Trotsky to Stalin, and the new reformed constitution of the U. S. S. R. are lessons in dictatorial relativity that belie the absolutist philosophy of leadership. The successive stages of the Soviet experiment are in sharp contrast from General Goering's belief that "in political affairs Adolf Hitler is infallible just as the Roman Catholic believes that in religious matters the Pope is infallible." Even democracies may seek to close men's minds, and imprison men's thoughts. The Sedition Bill of 1934 embodied the principle of the dictatorship of the Executive as against the rule of law in England. In a single year about 1933, there were 50,000 arrests in India for political reason. The teaching of Darwin's evolution

to the pupils secured a conviction for the Dayton schoolmaster in America. These indications against liberty under democratic rule are not without significance in collective Ethics.

The economic basis of social stratification carries with it inherent contradictions in class antagonism. The transference of power from feudal aristocracy to an urban middle-class involved Europe in centuries of intermittent war. England had a war and a couple of revolutions. After the Napoleonic war, in the height of industrial crisis the Reform Bill (1832) transferred power from the land owning aristocracy to the industrial middle class. A century thereafter, the post-war crisis called for a further economic re-adjustment. If violence and bloodshed are to be avoided, modern history should furnish the clue. If bitterness be met with bitterness, liberty will be stifled. Will the birth of a socialist-democracy answer the call ?

While capitalism unitary or democratic goes against social freedom since the economic inequalities generate hostilities within the state rendering life insecure, while the socialist autocracy denies freedom in the name of internal safety against counter-revolution, and external defence, the combination of socialism and democracy in the national sphere alone does not carry with it the guarantee of extended freedom. Liberty is the product of peace. Democracy even socialistic may, and will in time, develop its contradictions. If class antagonisms are liquidated, other differences will take their place. Life sees no full stop, in the history of human organisation. Something in the line had been in existence in India in the old autonomous village unit. A rational, planned way of life directed to one co ordinating end in which each individual in any rank may rise to another if he can stand the strain is the return to divisional labour based on inherent and acquired character-activity (Guna and Karma). But the triple requirements of policy, economy and psychiatry

(G. Heard in *Aryan Path*, Sept., 1933) tended through ages to split humanity into caste-compartments rather than preserve the main purpose of co-ordination unimpaired. After all our ideals and sublime flights, life for the majority, and even for the minority in the greater part, is the routine, dull, drab, process of somehow spending itself. Yet it is in that vast expanse of dreariness, of indifferent commonplace and out of it that human genius for co operation evolves and emerges. That signifies that there is no individual or class that may with impunity be neglected or disregarded, without detriment or loss of opportunity to the entire race. This is true in our time not merely in the idealist, sentimental old world sense, but due to the closer knitting together of the peoples through scientific invention, the reactions of authority on liberty cover a wider expanse.

We are accustomed to hear criticism of scientific civilisation. The wireless, radio, cinema and the press are to-day the organs of authoritarian propaganda. Not only has science furnished material for collectivising death through colossal engineering in armaments, bombs, poison-gas, submarines and air craft, but it has helped the unscrupulous usurpation of power over men's minds by perverted direction. Idealism, absolute or qualified, that has been generated and nourished on capitalist thought cannot visualise the remedy without scrapping the entire machinery overladen with evil. However much man seeks to detach himself from historical antecedents, they pursue him inexorably, and somewhere in the texture of his thought the trail is left of affection for what he believes is good, and aversion for what he, however mistakenly, supposes is evil. The highest evil lies in the formulation as absolute truth of what after greater experience, the individual or community may have occasion to revise. In our limited experience, we come across a few instances and therefrom pretend to have compre-

hended the whole truth, and are worried if our absolute predictions are assailed.

Village communities flourished in an era of natural plenty. Unitary production met the few wants that men had then. But we have travelled farther on the road than the satisfaction of animal cravings, and the projection of individual brains into the great Beyond. Life philosophical and secular is to-day more intimately collective than at any time in world-history. To day the old myth of the East and West having radically different psychology does not hold. The pompous colourful pageants of empire and authority have ceased to impress the oriental mind. The modernisation of Japan, Communism and the No-God movement in China and the demand for complete democracy and self government in India show that tariffs preventing life from becoming an interconnected whole are no longer valid, and sorely need revision. "Here is a human family riven into violently conflicting and stupidly selfish groups. Let us concentrate the most expert wisdom of the race on it". (J. McCabe, *Can We Save Civilisation?* p. 254). 'The only thing that can save it (civilisation) is right thinking about economics.' (Sir Josiah Stamp) "The economic interest, the question of our prosperity is dominant and fundamental and we ought not to have our attention diverted from it by meretricious talk about purposes of life and spiritual realities."

The philosophical theory that reality is material does not imply that lack of ideals of individual or collective conduct which the charge against materialism often suggests. To scoff at the physical basis of life is not spirituality. (Annam na nindyat, annam na parichakshita). Nor is it permissible to live on scarcity (annam bahu kurvita) Nor again is it permissible to withhold shelter from anyone. (Na kanchana vasa-tau pratyachakshita). This is a pointer against unitary possession. Social economy from the earliest time in India had tended to collectivism. As for the elimination of the

profit-motive by detachment from the fruit of labour, the Hindu genius had anticipated socialisation, (Santushto yena kenachit, aniketah, Gita, XII, 19) Unattachment, absence of identification with son, wife, home etc., (asaktiranabhishnangah putra dara grihadishu, Gita XIII, 10) are the product of the higher plane of collective life. The soviet experiment at socialisation suffers from the perennial terror of the breakdown from within, and has to compete with antagonism without. The activity thus engendered cannot divest itself from affection and aversion, and cannot liberate itself from strain and misgiving. It creeps on the Tamasic, or the lower Rajasic plane of human effort, but can hope to rise to the satvic level only when the world-environment permits of the disinterested pursuit of truth in any quarter.

Realism cannot do away with leadership, anymore than the formulations of idealistic theorists relying on Jivan Muktas, and intellectual aristocrats. But the range of leadership will be limited to the ordering of life on the planet, rather than arranging things in the afterworld. Life is meant for living, and the modern state should express the aspirations of manhood in the art of living well. In those aspirations, there are no preferences, tariffs and embargoes. An intellectual aristocracy designed to maintain the pattern of culture tends to individuate particular patterns, driving them away from the currents of general life. The march of evolution from unicellular organisms has been one successive process of increasing integration. The nation-states are not the final phases of the integration of human life, nor is war the only means of settling differences. In individual conflicts we have learnt to refer our troubles to disinterested tribunals. The Kellogg-Briand pact sought to extend the principle of non violence to international problems. To-day its failure is attested by Ethiopia, China, Austria, Spain, Czecho-slovakia. Realism learnt to acknowledge failure, but is not content with its finality. Non violence on the mass-scale

is not beyond human effort. The Ahimsa philosophy that Gandhiji brought into social practice while nations were drafting pacts and covenants liquidated the antithesis between authority and liberty on a continental scale. We have to take lessons from history to prevent leadership from re-installing irresponsible authority, and protest whenever life is sought to be constricted in the name of discipline.

Leadership is far from dictatorship. In the name of education of the masses, the dictator closes down thought. The masses are the ultimate masters of the race. They may need to be educated. But the responsibility for ordering the affairs of life, economic, political and every other should ultimately rest upon their intelligent choice. The vote is no substitute for bread, but in the production and distribution of resource, political discretion should rest on the concrete body of the peoples of the world

The super-state that will co ordinate the nations will then be not an imposition from without, but the product of deliberate surrender of some of the essential authorities now vested in the nation-states for the better safe-guarding of the liberties of the nations and the individuals comprising them. Among the shifting scenes of life, the prospect of one political umbrella may not be an impossibility, but if it should protect man from the scorching sun and shield him from cosmic rain, it should be held close to the earth, not turned towards the starry skies. Man's cunning (craft, Yoga) does not own defeat even from machine-raj. The problem of scientific civilisation is not beyond synthesis.

Freedom and Authority

By

HUMAYUN KABIR

I propose to start from the conception of the social organism as the fact and examine how far and in what respects freedom and authority are involved in it. I take it that there will be no difference of opinion about the starting point, for if society be liquidated, freedom and authority vanish simultaneously. An individual in isolation from society has neither freedom nor authority, for both are essentially social concepts. Man exercises his freedom or his authority in the milieu of social relationships, and with the disappearance of society, they must also disappear.

Freedom and authority are therefore social concepts, and must be, for man is essentially a social being. This social character is grounded in his nature, for rationality presupposes the transcendence of the individual, and without rationality, there can be neither freedom nor authority. Both are attended with self consciousness and self-consciousness without rationality is an impossibility. Nor is this all, for freedom implies authority and vice versa. They are distinct but not different, and any attempt to regard one as primary is bound to lead to contradictions. In effect, most of the problems concerning freedom and authority are due to loss of insight into this fundamental fact. The moment we try to isolate freedom from authority and base the one upon the other, we distort their true significance and misunderstand the nature of the social whole.

The concept of social organism is therefore our basic fact. Analysis of social organism reveals to us that social phenomena are always in a state of unstable equilibrium. The analogy between social and physical organisms must not be pressed too far, for in the physical organism, the organism is the fact and its limbs are mere moments. The relation even there can be regarded as one of interdependence, but there is no gain-saying the fact that the organism has a greater importance than the component units. The importance of the units is mainly, if not solely, functional, and these functions are determined by the purpose of the organism. Even where there is an appearance of contrariety, analysis will show that the contrariety is only apparent. It is however different with the social organism. The units are centres of individuality and independence, and refuse to be regarded as mere components of the organism. Society no doubt claims the allegiance of its members, but the fact that the claim has actually to be made and may in certain circumstances be refused proves that the analogy of the relation of the limb to the physical organism does not apply.

The instability of equilibrium in all social phenomena is the result of this peculiar trait in the character of the social organism. Elsewhere I have tried to distinguish the two factors that are responsible for the instability, and argued that maladjustment between social order and social content explains why the social organism never achieves static equilibrium. I have there defined social order as "the pattern of relationships that has grown through the interplay of the forces with which the different elements in the social unit are charged", and social content as "the sumtotal of the desires and anticipations, experiences and aspirations, interests and allegiances of the mass of individuals who compose the social group." The disharmony between the two is the result of the refusal of the individual to be submerged in the social consciousness. Man

is a social being no doubt, but he is not merely social. If he were, there would be no problem of the relation of authority and freedom, for authority which is the dynamic expression of the prevailing social order would be merely a function of the social content so defined. Man is not however merely social and the problem created by the stubborn intransigence of the individual is still further complicated by the fact that there is almost inevitably a time-lag between the social order and the social content, the order at any moment being the reflection, not of the prevailing disposition of social interests, but that of the interests of the stage immediately antecedent to it.

The paradox may be stated as follows. Freedom and authority both represent normative claims, and in purely natural happenings, there is no question of either. It is only metaphorically that the earth exercises compulsion on the falling apple and the activity (and hence freedom) of the apple in such a situation is equally illusory. Similarly, the limbs of the human body have as little freedom as the body has authority. In a word, it is only in the realm of self-conscious and therefore unique individualities that problems of freedom and authority can arise.

As soon as the problem is stated in this way, it becomes clear that even in a pure democracy, authority and freedom need not necessarily coalesce. Granting the rationality of the participants, the differences in their points of view still remain, and it is at best a hope that unanimity will be achieved in spite of differences in perspective. Without entering into the question of the metaphysical reality or otherwise of the general will, there is no denying that we can measure it only by reference to the will of all. Short of perfect unanimity therefore, and there is logically no guarantee for it, there must be either a compromise or a deadlock. Deadlock if pressed would loosen the social bonds and end in disruption of the social organism. Compromise would involve

the suppression of particular points of view, and again there is no guarantee that it will be voluntary. Besides, voluntary or compelled, the fact of suppression remains and marks a limit to the freedom of the component units. No doubt in practical life, attempts are made to determine on deadlock or compromise on the merits of the case, but as all practical politicians know, this is the problem which demands their most anxious and painful thought and yet, barring a few exceptional cases, remains unsolved to the end of time.

Acquiescence may be regarded as a form of acceptance and in practical life, it often is. But equally, acquiescence may be the result of impotence and it is surely paradoxical to say that the Czeck acceptance of German demands in respect of Sudetenland is an expression of Czeck freedom. Logically, the distinction is still more glaring, and the claim to freedom of a minority even in a pure democracy remains unsolved. If this be the position in a pure democracy, what can we expect in a state of modern dimensions where participation in the exercise of sovereignty by all the members of the state, even if they desire it, is a physical impossibility? Further it is also true that all the members of a state do not desire to exercise their sovereignty but are content to pursue the tenour of their individual lives. Man is not consistently a political animal and the world that is most important to him is the world he has built up round his own experience. He generally thinks, not politically, not socially, but in terms of his individual happiness or misery and lets the affairs of the world pass unheeded by till suddenly its impact makes him realise that however much he may try, he cannot live apart from it, that his good is inextricably tied up with the social good. The problem of citizenship in modern representative democracy is therefore that of reconciling freedom and authority and can be achieved only by adjusting the theoretical sovereignty of all the people

with its actual exercise by a body which, however wide its composition, can never include the whole membership of the state. Though implying potential sovereignty, citizenship thus demands conformity to the laws laid down by the actual government to regulate political conduct but always with the recognition of the individual to go his own lonely way in all matters that do not directly enter into the structure of social life.

The problem of citizenship is therefore the reconciliation of the demands of freedom and authority within the social organism. Man is no doubt a political animal but he is equally an inherently solitary being. No two men are exactly alike and the innate uniqueness of individuality necessitates the ultimate separation of every man from his fellows. He may combine with others for political, economic or other social purposes but he cannot merge his being into that of his fellowmen. There will always be the irrational surd of his personality. The spiritual sphere of human life, interpreting the term to include all science, morality and religion, is peculiarly the province where the unique quality of individuality finds fullest play. Men utter the same shibboleths and protest loyalty to the same ideals, but the white light of the abstract ideal comes tinged with the colour of his own personality. Temperament, disposition and capacity mould our desires and dreams. We demand freedom to work out our salvation according to our own lights. The state has no doubt in the past and even today sought to dominate the private and individual life of its members and determine the quality and texture of their experience of life. It has sought and is seeking to dictate what thoughts they shall think and what beliefs they shall believe under the threat of repudiation for non-conformity to its demands. But the motive behind this claim has received its urgency from the character of the state as the executive of a particular group

or class which has used it to maintain its position of supremacy in the social whole. The disharmony between the social order and the social content, though not identical with that between authority and freedom, is related to it, and is based, as we have already seen, on the imperfect elasticity of the social order on account of the unequal weightage of some interests against the others. The consequence is that a particular form of social order, and hence a particular type of state-form becomes identified with the group interest of a particular element within society, and the guarantee of its privilege is tied up with the maintenance of the social order in that particular form.

Inertia of social forms is therefore a function of the vested interests which govern the temper of any particular social organisation, and of all types of social order that based on the distinction of classes is the most rigid and inelastic. Conversely, a classless society offers perhaps the only instance in which the elasticity of variation can approach sufficiently close to unity to avoid the necessity of abrupt and discontinuous change in the face of continuous alterations in the social content. This is however obscured by the fact that the relation between vested interests and social forms is never revealed in its naked form. Authority has till now in human history been dependent on privilege, but at the same time the relation has been cloaked and a semblance of connection between authority and freedom kept up. The tendency has been to exalt status and not function in an attempt to supply each strata in society with a motive for the maintenance of the existing order. For this purpose, all the resources of the human spirit have been utilised, and philosophy and religion, art and education have been made subservient, sometimes consciously, sometimes not, to the purposes of the dominant class.

Philosophers therefore who find a solution of the problem of authority and freedom in an attempt to substitute regard

for the Absolute in place of self-regard are really helping the cause of the vested interests and increasing the rigidity of the social form. They divert the attention from the conflict here and now in an attempt to solve it with reference to the timeless and absolute. They forget or ignore that concentration upon the transcendental inevitably means the neglect of the empirical, and yet it is in the field of experience that the paradox of freedom and authority must be solved. Their bias towards the preservation of a social order in which the different interests shall be differently valued is still more exposed in their exaltation of status based upon certain spiritual values which are difficult, if not impossible of determination. As a result, their conception of both authority and freedom remains vague and ambiguous. To define liberty in terms of Brahman-regarding sentiment is not very helpful when Brahman itself defies all attempt at definition. Equally, it is paradoxical to offer a definition of authority in terms of self-assertion when the conclusion intends that self-assertiveness must be abstracted from it. The theory of vicarious suffering is another illustration of this assumption of inequality of status, but it forgets that spiritual coercion is also coercion and has as much chance of success or failure as physical violence. In a word, philosophers who interpret social phenomena from the point of view of the privileged or dominant class conceal even to themselves the fundamental cause of disharmony between social order and social content, and attempt solutions which merely shift the emphasis from one type or group of privileges to another, but do nothing to increase the resilience of the social order by abolishing the different weightages which lead to ossification and inelasticity.

The same bias expresses itself in another if subtler form in the theory of creativity and freeplay as the type of human activity. It is correct to say that authority is not superimposed to safeguard individual freedom, for it is the obverse of

freedom and as such involved in and involving it. But this fundamental unity is by implication denied the moment it is suggested that freedom is detachment from the external, whatever form the external may take. Detachment is a conception of negation and is rooted in difference, while the attempt of political theory is to reveal the secret bonds of identity between freedom and authority. The failure of theories based upon detachment and hence negation becomes clear the moment we identify manifestation of spirit with creativity, for creativity can never operate in vacuum. Even play has its relative purposes and pure play is as illusory as the free will of the indeterminist. Creativity or even play cannot operate in detachment from the social milieu and any attempt to exalt the detachment of the spirit tends to perpetuate the existing social order. Freedom and authority can be reconciled only in a society in which each unit is charged with equal political and economic potency, but the way to achieve this is, not detachment or playful and unpurposive activity, but the integration of all social units into a form in which the basis of weightage dependent upon social inequality in the political or economic sphere has been destroyed. Abolition of private property is therefore the condition precedent to the attainment of an elastic social order.

Democracy therefore marks the attempt to change the basis of the structure of society from status to function. At one time, the tendency was to regard the change as one from status to contract, but this overlooked the fact that contract is biased by the relative capacity of the contracting parties. No doubt the advance to a contractual conception of society was in itself a great gain, for status which is rigid and inelastic did not leave open even the possibility of change without conflict and upheaval. Yet the advance did not go far enough, for contract only served to cloak the underlying structure of society based upon the fact of status and did not

destroy it. The reflection of that on the political plane was the acceptance of the idea of political democracy, but this democracy remained theoretical and imperfect in its failure to realise its own implications. The advance can be clearly seen in the growth of the idea that all classes and persons have an equal right to happiness, an idea which we today accept without even a consciousness of its revolutionary significance when it was first felt or formulated. Democratic beliefs with regard to happiness were interrelated to a network of beliefs with regard to equality and liberty, but it was not clearly realised that all the claims of democracy in respect of happiness, equality and freedom are bound to remain mere hopes without a corresponding change in the economic structure of society. Contract no doubt opened to the individual the possibility of successfully claiming happiness, equality and liberty but contract did not indicate the means by which, without education and the other advantages that wealth under existing social conditions guarantees to its possessor, he could, while struggling for a bare pittance, successfully press his claims against those of his fellows whose energies had been concentrated upon their attainment without any hindrance or let. Contract therefore did not suffice as the basis of structure for social equity and in despair, in recent times there have been regressions into neo-authoritarianism in which status is sought to be re-established. The reasons for the decay of European Liberalism are to be sought in this, but the lesson of history is that there can be no retreat. European and world polity demands a fresh advance and we must march beyond the concept of contract to that of function as the basis of a new social order. The motto of this new society must be : From each according to his capacity, to each according to his need.

The conclusion then is that freedom and authority can be reconciled if we envisage a social order in which each

unit is charged with the same economic and political potency. This will require a society in which there is no private property. The elimination of private property will ensure on the one hand that the individual counts as one unit and no more in the social structure, and on the other, that this unit will be influenced by considerations of benefit to the social whole alone, as it has in social relationship no specific personal end. It is in such society alone that man's rationality has a chance of achieving its universality, and if it succeeds, authority and freedom become coincident. Even if it does not, the distinction between them is for the first time integrated and seen as the contrary aspects of the same social fact. Uniqueness of individuality in such a society will express itself in those activities to which we have given the name spiritual in the widest sense, for this is a sphere in which there can be no generalisation in terms of a lowest common denominator of accepted beliefs. The expression of this unique individuality of the self will constitute the essence of his freedom, while his conformity to the general social demands and processes in the field of economic and political activity will constitute the element of authority in his life. The elimination of the sense of restraint by the equalisation of social opportunities in economic and political spheres of activity will be the basis of freedom of the individual and will guarantee his acceptance of the general purposes of the social order of which he is a component. Absence of sense of restraint will lead to elimination of conflict, for conflict is generated out of repressions and disappointment. Peace will be the result of the reconciliation of freedom and authority, and infinite vistas of progress will open up before human endeavour.

Printed by—N. C. GHOSH, M. A.

At the TOWN ART PRESS.

121/A, Upper Circular Road, CALCUTTA.
